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A R T H U R C O N W A Y;

OR,

SCENES IN THE TROPICS.

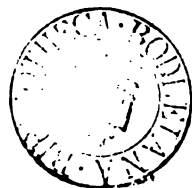
BY CAPTAIN MILMAN,

LATE H. M. 33RD REGIMENT.

AUTHOR OF "THE WAY-SIDE CROSS," &c.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.



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P R E F A C E.

THE following Work is given to the world under melancholy circumstances. The Author, who appeared to have commenced a promising literary career, by the production of "The Wayside Cross," in Mr. Murray's Colonial Library, was taken from the world suddenly by a fatal accident on December 21st, 1850.

In "Arthur Conway," which, at the time of his death, was in the publisher's hands, he had embodied the recollections of scenery and character in our tropical colonies, laid up by an accurate memory during a year's residence with his regiment in Dominica and other of the West Indian Islands. His companions have

PREFACE.

shed for the truthfulness of the descriptions which he has given us, and as his former work is esteemed by the best judges a faithful and y portraiture of Andalusia and Spanish life, I thought that the present Book will give an ally exact and vivid picture of Life in the pics, so much less known and so little erstood in Europe.

does not become his relations to express private feelings, and the blank produced in their circle by his loss. The public, however, forgive them for this brief notice, as the author had desired that the accuracy and truthness of his representations, might render his as of fiction in some measure useful as well



ARTHUR CONWAY.

CHAPTER I.

ROUND a table, in a well-furnished room of one of the most fashionable of the Oxford Colleges, sat a party of seven or eight young men, who called themselves "The Knights of the Round Table." The cloth had been removed, and the wine was circulating freely. It was the fashion in those days to drink deep. Merriment and hilarity seemed the order of the evening; though outside a terrible storm was raging.

The wind swept in furious gusts down the

High Street, and howled around the buildings mournfully. The rain came down furiously, beating against the windows as if it would drive them in. Although the candles shone brightly, and the fire played cheerily, the gleam of the lightning-flashes flickered before the eyes of the assembled guests, and every now and then the cracking thunder proclaimed with its awful voice the war of the elements. A winter storm is always doubly fearful. But what cared they ?

At the head of the table sat the giver of the feast, a handsome young man, with blue eyes, and curling, light-brown hair. He alone of all the party seemed affected by the storm. He was dressed in mourning, and, although he did the honours of the table courteously, and kept the bottle circulating freely, his manner was nervous and distracted. His figure was slight, but not in the least boyish ; he looked, however, younger than he was, for that day he had come of age.

"Let us drink the health of King Arthur, with three times three!" said one, rising and filling a bumper. "The best rider, the best oar, and the best scholar of his year at Christchurch, and now the owner of Morley Hall, a palace in the Mall, and other lands and mesuages unknown. Hip! hip! huzza!"

"King! who would not be such a king? No Commons to depose him,—no 'off with his head!'"

"Talking of Commons puts me in mind that Lord Powis wants to enclose part of Ackshaw Heath, but the Commons won't let him."

"That would be a levelling principle, and would bring peer and peasant to an equality."

"How so?"

"Don't you see? In former days the Commons fought for the Barons, but now the Barons fight for the Commons; for the common is a barren which the Baron wishes to enclose in his own pale; once within the same pale, they must be equal."

"Ha! ha!"

"You will keep the hounds on, I hope, Arthur, and the stud at Newmarket?" said a rising sportsman.

"What ails your kingly Grace?" said one, who was always quoting and misquoting Shakspeare. "You looked just now as if you would rather 'talk of graves, of worms, and epitaphs, than caper nimbly in a lady's chamber. 'Tis a rough night, my liege; but what of that? Throw sorrow to the dogs! Care killed the cat! If you don't drink, you'll dwindle, peak and pine. The bottles are all out. What ho! more wine!'"

"I go, and it is done,—the bell invites me!" replied Arthur, in the same vein, shaking off his apathy for the moment; but it was only for the moment, for as soon as the wine was brought, he relapsed into his silent, abstracted mood. He filled his glass mechanically, and drank the contents off; but it tasted to him like wormwood.

"Fill your glasses, and no heeltaps ! Here's the health of the future Queen of Morley, whoever she may be, and I can only hope that she will be chaster than Guiever !"

"Arthur is in love already,—only look at him !"

"Yes, with ten thousand a-year."

"I'll bet you a guinea he is. Come, Arthur, confess it."

"By Jove! what a flush !"

It was now observed by more than one that their host was deadly pale. They were a merry, but not dissipated set, and the wine that they had drunk was just sufficient to quicken their feelings and apprehensions. They whispered together, and one of them, rising, said, kindly :

"This is no night for revelry, Arthur. You look ill, and had better go to bed. Give us a cup of coffee, and we will go."

"You are very considerate, my dear fellows," replied Conway. "I do indeed feel strangely

ill. I think it is the thunder that affects me. But it would be the height of inhospitality to turn you out on such a night as this !”

“Not a bit of it. We will adjourn for the nonce, and have it out another time. Sport your oak, and go to bed.”

They were gone.

Still the wind howled, the rain beat, and the storm rattled, and Arthur Conway remained seated where he was, with his head drooping over the table, and resting on his hands, with which he formed a shade over his eyes from the sickly glare of the candles, and the dazzle of the lightning ; but close to his face, lying on the table, was the miniature of a bright-eyed girl. The upper part of her face was beautiful, and singularly soft, but about the mouth and curling upper lip there was an expression of pride, and even harshness, so faithfully portrayed, that it marred the otherwise lovely picture in any eyes but his.

“Why art thou cast down, oh, my soul?

and why art thou so disquieted in me?" murmured the young man, using the words of the Psalmist, so peculiarly adapted to his frame of mind at that moment. "How can I account for this fearful despondency? Is it your image, sweet Edith, that causes it? Oh! how I love thee! But is that love returned? Why do I doubt? Fool that I was, not to make sure of her when I was plain Arthur Conway, with a few thousands. Then I had no doubt of her sincerity; but now, might not men say, even if she consented to become mine, that she loved not Arthur Conway, but the owner of Morley. Oh, these doubts! how they unmake a man! But will this account for the miserable depression I now feel? It ought not, for I still hope. Is it not, rather, some harbinger of evil dimly foreshadowing itself on my mind, sent by heaven, lest I should become too elated with my prosperity? Whatever it is, I am very miserable!"

A tear dropped on the miniature, and he

stooped to kiss it away ; but, before he could do it, a flash passed between his face and Edith's. He paused, then came the crash of the thunder-clap, close—so close that it made the glasses ring again, and the whole building seemed to quiver from the shock.

“What !” cried he, starting up. “Do the very elements warn me against thee !—does the lightning interfere, and the thunder say thou shalt not be mine !——What nonsense I am talking !” murmured poor Arthur, as he sank down again into his chair. “Surely my brain must be a little disordered to-night, or has the wine had an unusual effect upon me ? I'll go to bed, and try and sleep it off. Dear Edith ! did I think ill of thee ?—forgive me !”

The young man quietly extinguished the candles, and retired to rest ; and, as his senses became calmer, the storm gradually died away ; and, when he fell asleep, the stars peeped out in the deep purple sky.

* * * * *

Sir William Deverell, the late owner of Morley Hall, was a very eccentric character. Possessed of enormous wealth, he squandered much of it away, not on himself, but on his dependents, who feathered their nests comfortably at his expense—for he never looked into his accounts. He kept a pack of fox-hounds, but never hunted; he had a stud of running horses at Newmarket, which he never saw, and which of course rarely won; a house in London, which he kept up, but never used, excepting on one memorable occasion, when he slept in it; a train of sleek men-servants, grooms, and hangers-on, who did what they pleased, which was very little, and a French cook, who did still less, for, to Sir William, a chop and a glass of cider was a feast. Consistent in inconsistencies, he was a professed Republican, but a bitter aristocrat; a philanthropist, but he contrived to quarrel with most of his neighbours. He declaimed against women, but it was whispered that this was because he had been rejected by

more than one, and that he was very fond of the fair sex. He raved against Popery, and upheld Protestantism, but had never been known to enter a church. He was a devoted admirer of Lord George Gordon, and it was said that he had assisted that eccentric nobleman with large sums of money, though he would not throw a sixpence to a starving wretch.

The only night he had slept in his house in the Mall—perhaps to disarm suspicion—was that on which Newgate was burned down. No one could guess who would succeed to his enormous wealth and estates, which were not entailed. The immediate heir, or, rather, next of kin, was Sir Walter Conway, the head of that family, and uncle to the young Oxonian whom we have already introduced to our readers; but it was supposed that he had on several occasions offended Sir William by his votes in Parliament.

Sir William Deverell died suddenly, whilst enjoying his favourite pursuit of fishing; but his age already had exceeded that allotted to

man. Great was the excitement on opening his will, which was found on a scrap of dirty paper in his fishing-case, though duly signed, sealed, and witnessed; and great was the astonishment of all, and the consternation of many who had reckoned on being noticed in the will, when it was found that he had left the whole of his estates, real and personal, to his second cousin, Arthur Conway, and to his heirs for ever. It was dated on the 5th of November, 1772; just twenty-two years before the opening of this tale. There was but one mode of accounting for this unexpected disposal of his vast property, which was, that Mr. Conway had once said, in conversation with Sir William Deverell, "that he thought, as long as the Roman Catholic religion should hold its ground, so long would there be despotism in Europe."

The will was very short.

"I leave and bequeath the whole of my estates, real and personal, to my second cousin,

Arthur William Conway, and to his heirs, male, for ever, provided he does not marry a Roman Catholic woman.

“Signed,

“WILLIAM DEVERELL,

“Witnessed by

“John Anguish, apothecary,

“Tom Ellam, gamekeeper.”

Mr. Conway had now been dead several years, but the will had never been revoked or altered, and young Arthur de la Motte Conway was astonished and delighted one day at receiving from his attorney, a letter enclosing a copy of the will, and requesting his presence at Morley Hall to attend the funeral. Arthur hated funerals and would not go, but left everything to his attorney.


* * * * *

Sir Walter Conway was the owner of a family estate in the same county, and not very

far from Morley Hall. He had been wild and dissipated in his youth, and had raised large sums at an exorbitant rate of interest from those harpies who are always ready to pounce upon any young man of certain property. He was, in consequence, in after life, much embarrassed, and every acre of the Grange, as his estate was called, was mortgaged to its full extent. He had made an improvident marriage.

Lady Conway was an aristocratic beauty of the order insipid, genus doll, yet she had been a standing toast at the clubs. A smile from her rosy lips had been to more than one unsophisticated youth, as an emanation from a superior being, and to catch a favouring glance from her soft blue eye, was to encounter a ray from Paradise too dazzling for the heart to sustain without a wound. To the surprise of all, the dashing, hard-drinking, hard-riding Baronet wooed and won her. Her sole taste was in dress and equipage, and a coach with

four-in-hand was to her a *sine qua non*. As her parents who, though noble, were poor, could not afford to keep one for her use, she could not refuse an offer from one apparently rich, certainly handsome, and in her own set. She soon helped him in wasting his estate, and infatuated as he was with her beauty, it was not long before he discovered that there was nothing beneath the surface but extravagance and frivolity, and bitterly did he repent his choice. Although extremely selfish, Sir Walter was by no means a harsh man by nature, but finding that his favourite pursuits of hunting and racing would be incompatible with his wife's extravagant habits, he began to accuse her of them, and threatened to reduce her establishment. She, in turn, recriminated, and neither would give in. But before long, his hounds and horses and her coach and four were sold to appease some of the most pressing creditors, and they lived very unhappily together.



Two daughters were the issue of this ill-assorted marriage. The eldest, Edith, now about twenty-one years of age, strongly resembled both her parents in feature and character. Her auburn hair and blue eyes were her mother's, but the latter sparkled with brighter lustre; her slightly aquiline nose and determined haughty but ruby-lipped mouth were her father's. Like the one, she was extremely fond of dress, and usually indolent; but, on the other hand, she could shake it off when she chose to please and become lively and agreeable. She was a bold, graceful, and fearless horsewoman, and delighted to display her fine figure in her well-fitting riding-habit and plumed hat in the hunting-field, to the intense admiration of the neighbouring squires. She took long rides, and flirted with her young cousin Arthur whenever he spent the vacations, which he usually did, at the Grange, and as Sir Walter and his brother had always been on good terms—for there had as yet been

no cause of rivalry or jealousy between them—Mrs. Conway, who was an invalid, and required warm country air, was always welcome, and was generally asked to meet her son at the Grange. She, poor thing, could not see the danger her son was incurring from his constant, unwatched intercourse with his handsome cousin. The mother's warning might have interposed before it was yet too late, but it was never spoken, and Arthur, who had passed the last long vacation basking in the smiles of the lovely Edith, had returned to Oxford, hopelessly and irremediably in love.

Her father either did not, or would not notice this familiar intercourse, or, perhaps, he thought it but natural between two cousins, and her mother was too wrapt up in self,—too much engaged with keeping her declining beauty alive to perceive it at all; so no one interfered. Yet there were two persons at the Grange who not only saw that poor Arthur was head and ears in love with his dangerous cousin, but felt for him

deeply in their different ways. Louisa, who had just emerged from the chrysalis state of the girl to that of the woman, resplendent in beauty and purity, was like her mother in face and figure, but, oh, how different in her mind ! Exquisitely soft and feminine in her person, her intellect was strong and vigorous. She had been neglected and put aside—eclipsed—by her more showy and dashing sister ; but as if she thrived best in the shade, she grew from the retiring, awkward child, into the fascinating, intellectual woman. There was another thing, too, that seemed, as it were, to separate her from the rest of her family, which was, that she was deeply imbued with a true feeling of religion. The rest might profess it outwardly, but she alone had that sincere and inward yearning of the heart which, searching after the truth, finds it through faith, and keeps it with holy fervour to the end, which is eternal happiness.

Louisa had early discovered the growing attachment of the poor boy to his cousin, and

pitied him sincerely ; for she knew, although Edith had never made her a confidant, that the love was not reciprocal, and that her sister regarded it as a mere boyish caprice—a whim of a season, which the first contact with the world would remove. Once—and once only—had she ventured to remonstrate with Edith on the subject, but she had met with such a rebuff, that she felt it was useless to say more. Her sister had said :

“ How do you know that I do not love Arthur? Neither my father nor mother object to our seeing so much of each other, then why should you? Your interference would make me suppose, if you were not so young, that you were already jealous that his attentions are not more equally divided.”

Upon this, Louisa had blushed deeply, and burst into tears. Edith kissed her, and seemed very unhappy at having disturbed her ; but a reconciliation was soon effected, and the cousins took a long ride that evening together.

The second person who had watched poor Arthur's love from its first budding, was Edith's own maid, the daughter of a respectable tenant on the Deverell estate, a black-eyed, black-haired, lively Devonshire lass. Pretty Dinah Derrick had her admirers too, and it was currently believed that she was engaged to a young man, well to do in the world, who had already risen from the humble post of cabin-boy, to be master of a large vessel, that traded from Plymouth—which was not very remote from Morley—to the West Indies. She it was who placed on her mistress' toilet-table the fresh flowers, gathered in the morning before the dew was off, by the love-sick Oxonian. Through her were sent those pretty messages and inquiries which mark devoted attention, and to which she received the replies. By these she was able, in some degree, to judge of the feelings on both sides.

This constant going between had its effect.

She saw plainly that poor Arthur's love was hopeless, and she pitied him, and, at the same time, thought that her mistress was wanting in discrimination not to love such a handsome, fascinating young man. To her, he appeared a superior being, so unlike the rough, unpolished squires, so unlike her own coarse-spoken lover. His skin was so smooth, his hands so small and white, and he spoke so softly ; and then he was so good-looking, and sat his horse like a prince. Poor Dinah !

* * * * *

During the summer, the whole party above-mentioned, with the exception of Mr. Conway, who, as has already been stated, had been dead some years, were assembled at the Grange. Although Sir Walter Conway did not quite agree in politics with the owner of Morley, nor, indeed, in anything else, yet he was very fond of the place, for he was passionately addicted to sporting. The hounds, the stud, the splendid

covers, the leaping trout-stream, formed an irresistible nucleus of attraction to the sporting Baronet ; and as their proper owner never interfered in their management, his servants, no doubt regarding Sir Walter as his successor, were always anxious to please him ; and horses, hounds, huntsmen, and keepers, were all at his command, as if he had been really their master. A vague hope inspired him at times that he should one day become so, although he felt that the eccentric character of Sir William rendered that hope very uncertain ; yet he was so accustomed to Morley, that it seemed to him almost impossible that it should pass into other hands than his.

Young Arthur, too, was an especial favourite with the keepers, particularly with old Tom Ellam, the head of that establishment, and his son Tom, the younger.

He rode well, shot well, and could throw a fly—then an art known to few,—was prodigal

of his person, and liberal with his purse, and, above all things, always spoke civilly and kindly to them. But old Sir William took very little notice of him, and always treated him as a mere boy. Tom Ellam shook his head knowingly at this, when it was done in his presence, and would wink, and chuckle, and smile, as if he knew all about it. He had initiated Arthur into the mysteries of trout-fishing, and this summer he was dreadfully vexed when the Mayfly was running, and the stream alive with fish, to find his young master, as he called him, when he came over to Morley, always riding or walking with his cousin Edith, unconscious of the fact that the old keeper was watching him anxiously, and with much disapprobation. Thus briefly have we endeavoured to sketch the position of the Conway family, a short time previous to the death of the eccentric Sir William Deverell.

That event created much heart-burning, much misery, crime, sorrow, and repentance, when his

will, like Pandora's box, was opened, and spread them around.

But before we enter into the career of crime, it is necessary to relate the history of Arthur's parents, which was singularly romantic.

CHAPTER II.

IN the summer of the year 177—; a great sensation was created amongst certain circles in Paris, by the elopement or sudden disappearance of a young lady of noble family. Many rumours of course arose, and many stories were soon in circulation, some with and some without foundation. Some said that her body lay at the Morgue, but that her family was ashamed to own it; others, that she had run away with a young officer of the Garde Royale, who had disappeared about the

same time; and again, that she had been forcibly abducted, and then murdered, by a certain fashionable Marquis, whom her family had desired for her husband, but to whom it was known the young lady herself had an unconquerable aversion. It was even hinted that the King himself had some hand in her sudden and mysterious disappearance; but few, very few, knew the real cause of her flight, or anything of her subsequent history. We are, however, able to give nearly the whole of it, by collating and arranging the events of her life, which are scattered somewhat confusedly over the original manuscript, as her son became acquainted with them.

Eugenie de la Motte, nobly born, and highly connected, might have formed an alliance with the greatest in the land, had she not been of a singularly unambitious and reserved disposition. She mixed very little in the gaieties of the gayest city in the world, and this was generally attributed to shyness, to awkwardness, to any-

thing but the truth. She liked them not; she saw the hollowness, the frivolity and licentiousness of the society in which she must have moved, had she quitted her retirement. But her own words will show more clearly the motives of her conduct.

A letter is extant, written in a small female hand, in the French language, and signed Eugenie, which no doubt is a copy of one left behind her for the purpose of explaining why she left her parents, her home, her country, to follow the fortunes of one whom she loved sufficiently to forget in his arms what she had lost.

That she loved him we can scarcely doubt, but that she did not mourn his melancholy fate long, subsequent events proved. The following is an extract from the letter:

"I fly from persecution. May the great God grant me mercy and forgiveness if I am doing wrong; but from you I ask neither.

You gave me the alternative of wedding the Marquis de Charolles—a *roué* and a gambler—or entering a convent; you cannot plead ignorance that the first was loathsome to me. Now learn, if you are not already aware of it, that the alternative you proposed would be even more hateful; for in one case, it would be but the gradual destruction of the body; but in the other, there would be a moral, an everlasting death, an infamy. I am not of your religion, and I will not lead a living death. My mother was a Huguenot, and I am one. O father, father! you know it, and yet you can sacrifice your daughter before the shrine of the monster riches, or force her to lead a death in life. Dreamedst thou that I had eyes, and could not see? There is a Book forbidden to us by persecution, that clears the understanding. I read it, but thou dost not; this then is the secret. ‘Saul! Saul! why persecutest thou me?’ Nay, father, it was thy pernicious doctrines, and thy evil counsellors, who wrought upon thee to

persecute thy poor child. Forgive thy Eugenie ; but no, no, they will not allow thee even that consolation, thou wilt curse her to thy dying day. I know them, I fear them, and I have fled. They will seek me, but they shall not find me. There is one even mightier than they, and He will comfort the afflicted, not between the dreary walls of the living sepulchre, but in the glorious and open face of beaming nature, where the knee can bow, and the heart lift up its voice in adoration, not to painted images, but to Him who sits upon the throne. Why didst thou press me, O my father, thus cruelly ? When I knelt at thy feet, and told thee the workings of my heart ; when I wept and prayed, and told thee that I could not love the dark, fearful man, with the glittering black eyes ; why, oh, why didst thou spurn me from thee ? ‘ This man or a convent ! ’ The words scorched me. ‘ Thou shalt wed him or Jesus ! ’ Oh, horrible, impious blasphemy ! Am I thy daughter ? My

eyes are dry, I cannot weep ! no tear will drop to blot this page ; behold, I am calm. God has given the weak one strength—the strength of the martyr. Yet, think not that I seek death. That were a triumph to my persecutors. No, I fly to the world. I live, because it is a mortal sin to die before the hand of God is stretched forth to call me from the world. I may never be happy again ; but I will not die a moral death. Father, farewell. I will not ask you to bless me ; but oh, do not curse your daughter !

“ EUGENIE.”

There is a great incoherence and much seeming inconsistency in this letter ; and it may be observed, that there is not a hint of any earthly love beyond that of breathing freely in the world, untrammelled by the miseries of a conventual life, or the stronger and more hateful existence of a bright being bound for life to one hated, scorned, and loathed. Never-

theless, the following scene, which occurred about four years after the mysterious disappearance of the fair Eugenie from Paris, will show that love had something to do with it.

Mr. Conway was travelling on horseback, with one armed attendant, through Piedmont and the south of France. One lovely summer afternoon he had quitted Nice, on his way to Marseilles, riding leisurely, and wandering about through by-ways and bridle-roads, in search of the picturesque.

As he was emerging from a thick grove of chestnut-trees, he heard a cry and a woman's scream. Setting spurs to his horse, he rode rapidly to the place from whence the sound seemed to proceed. In an open glade of the forest, lying prostrate on the smooth turf, was the body of a young man, with raven-black hair, the dark blood welling from a wound in his side. A fair girl, with bright golden tresses, was leaning over him, striving frantically to stop the gushing life-blood; and then springing

wildly up, and screaming, with outstretched hands, "My child! my child!"

About a hundred yards off, a cavalier on horseback, with a bright glittering eye and scowling brow, held up a child, crying fearfully, towards the frantic mother, as if for her to come and fetch it, in triumph and malicious mockery; but when he saw the two horsemen approaching, he turned his horse round, and rode off at full speed, and in a moment was lost to view in the depths of the forest.

Mr. Conway threw himself off his horse to assist the lady in her fearful task; but she, pointing in the direction of the retreating horseman, cried, in heart-rending accents: "My boy, my darling boy—oh, save him from the cruel Marquis!"

The Englishman quickly remounted, and, followed by his attendant, pursued the fugitive, but in vain; the soft turf betrayed not the sound of the horse's hoofs, and the dense forest hid him from their view. Mr. Conway soon

saw the utter hopelessness of attempting the capture of the fugitive, and retraced his steps towards the bereaved mother.

Even in that one short moment he had been struck with the singular loveliness of that fair young girl.

As he returned, she ran towards him, eagerly crying: "My boy! where is my boy?"

"Alas! I have not been able to trace them; I lost them in the depths of the forest. But, my dear lady, let me seek for some assistance."

And Mr. Conway dismounted, and raised the prostrate figure from the ground. There was no life in it. He laid it gently down again on the turf.

The lady stood by, wringing her hands in anguish.

"Allow me, at least, Madame, to send my follower to your house for help," said the Englishman.

"Oh, no, no," she said, sobbing, as if her heart would break; "I shall be discovered.

Oh, *mon Dieu* ! I am discovered. The Marquis, the Marquis ! he with the glittering eyes. They will seek me out ; and he, my husband, my protector, is dead, dead ; and my child, my child, the Marquis has him ; he will kill him as he killed his father ; and my father will come, and the Marquis. Oh, save me, save me ! Who are you ?” she continued, grasping Mr. Conway by the arm, and looking wistfully into his face ; “are you not an Englishman ? They would shut me up for life in a convent, and I am a Huguenot. I read the Bible, like you. Will you not help a poor persecuted Huguenot ? Yes, yes, I know you will—I read it in your eyes. Let us fly.”

“Whither ?”

“To Rome—to my uncle, the Cardinal ; he can protect me.”

* * * *

The palace of the Cardinal Pietra at Rome ! A dark wainscotted room, hung with crimson drapery ; a few quaint carved oak chairs, and

an ebony table, inlaid with gold and ivory ; the floor of polished walnut, and in one corner a *prie Dieu*. In this chamber are two figures, forming a strange contrast. One is a tall, dark man, in a Cardinal's dress, with peculiarly marked eyebrows, and a bright expressive eye, not dimmed with age, though he is nearly seventy ; the other a beautiful girl, with bright, golden hair, and soft blue eyes.

"Daughter, I have sent for thee to tell thee unpleasant tidings. The Marquis is in Rome ; he seeks thee, my poor child."

Eugenie threw herself on her knees before him, and, clasping her hands together, besought him, in heart-rending accents, to save her—to protect her from what she feared worse than death. The dark-browed Cardinal raised his weeping niece, and folding her to his breast, kissed her on the forehead, whilst a tear trickled unbidden down his manly cheek.

"Your mother, Eugenie, was dear to me, and you—her image—have twined yourself

round my heart. How can I part with thee, my child? Yet they will discover thee—they will tear thee from me, and I have now no power, for his Holiness, the Pope, is in the hands of the Cardinal Espinoza, my bitterest enemy.”

“O, father, will it not be very dreadful?” she said, with great simplicity, in a voice half sad, half tender, “for I love.”

The Cardinal looked at her with surprise.

“And whom do you love, my daughter?”

Eugenie cast down her eyes, and blushed deeply, but replied, calmly, that it was the noble young Englishman who had saved her and conducted her so honourably to Rome, whom she now loved with her whole heart.

The Cardinal listened gravely and attentively, but shook his head reproachfully, as he said :

“But he is a heretic, my daughter, and no marriages can take place at Rome where both are not Catholics.”

"I would sooner die, my father, and I will die, rather than marry the Marquis, or live a living death, which is the alternative," she said, in a voice so calm, so still, so low, and yet so resolute, that it startled the dark-browed, stern-looking man.

She continued, as if speaking to herself :

"A convent ! What is it ? A living sepulchre. Once I said that I would not die—that it would be a triumph to my enemies ; but now—ah, me ! I love as I never loved—I knew not what love was. Can I commit such an awful perjury ?"

But we will not—in fact, we must not—dwell on these scenes, for we have a long tale to tell.

* * * *

About a week after this interview, there was a marriage at the British Embassy at Naples. The persons were the same as the two who fled from Fregys, but the names were changed.

They lived together for some time in perfect retirement, on the Chiaga.

One day, a present arrived from Rome. It was a beautifully-chased crucifix, with two little, but lovely pictures on panels behind the figure. The likeness of each individual figure in these pictures, to some who were still alive, and some who were dead, was very striking and remarkable: in fact, they were real portraits. A short note accompanied this beautiful present.

No one knew how it had been transmitted from Rome. It was left at the door by a man in the dress of a peasant, somewhere about daybreak. The note concluded with a warning:

“They are on your track. Beware!”

That morning Mr. Conway narrowly escaped assassination. He was dogged by bravos, and would have been stabbed but for the unlooked-for interference of two men dressed as contadinos.

Next morning, they quitted Naples for ever.

* * * *

Nine or ten months after this, there was a terrible storm on the east coast of England. A vessel coming from Hamburgh was driven on that frightful shore near Yarmouth. Before she was swallowed up in those awful sands, a yawl reached her.

Two passengers—a lady and gentleman—were saved, and one package, which the gentleman appeared to value more than himself, for he risked his life for it.

They were landed near Lowestoft. There the lady was taken dreadfully ill, and was confined prematurely. To the surprise of all, however, both the child and the lady survived, but the shock rendered her an invalid for the rest of her life.

Lowestoft was then an obscure fishing village, where a few herrings were salted,

not a watering-place as it is now ; there was, therefore, very little gossip, and nothing was known about the lady and gentleman, but that their name was Conway.

CHAPTER III.

THE storm which had burst over Oxford in its fury did not reach London; yet the wind murmured and sighed mournfully amongst the leafless trees in St. James's Park. There were faint flashes gleaming across the dark sky, and occasionally a low, rumbling sound came borne on the heavy air. Large drops of rain fell at intervals, and the whole atmosphere seemed loaded and oppressed with a palpable darkness.

A solitary individual was crossing the Park

from the Westminster side. He walked with a slow, but firm step, and his whole appearance indicated strength and resolution. He was about forty-five years of age, and bore in his mien something that denoted high birth, although he was now clad in a rusty suit of black, and carried a bundle under his arm.

"There will be a fearful storm to-night," muttered the man, in the French language. "The darkness is frightful; but it is welcome, for it hides my poverty. Curses on those howling revolutionary dogs who hunted me out of Paris—but I forget," added he, bitterly, "I am a priest, and we are taught to despise riches, and to mortify the flesh; but have we not our feelings and our passions like other men? only we must hide them from the world as if we were better than others. What can this Englishman want with the persecuted French priest? Has he some one to confess? Is he one of us? Well, well, I care not, for he offers me money—besides, is it not for

the greater glory of God? and does not the end sanctify the means? but can I attain that end without money? shall I scruple then to obtain it?—this is the reasoning, and it suits me. Will that fool Chaumelin meet me as I appointed, with the cross, and the vase, and the brush—those tools which we use, and which such fools as he put trust in. And I—what do I believe in?—nothing.”

The priest, for such he was, awful as his thoughts were, crossed the Park, and stopped before a large house in the Mall. Lights were moving to and fro, gleaming from the windows. The street-door was open, and there seemed some unusual bustle. One carriage with post-horses was just starting from the door, and another had that moment driven up.

“Is this life or death? Has one more wretch come into the world to swell the vast tide that is ever hurrying on to annihilation, or is it only one more added to the

heap of corruption and rottenness that forms the earth? whichever it is, I will profit by it." Thus muttered the Priest, as a dapper little man jumped nimbly out of the carriage, and entered the house. "Does Sir Walter Conway live here?" the priest inquired of a man-servant, who was standing at the door.

"Yees, he does," answered the footman, in that supercilious tone, which that description of animal knows so well how to assume, letting his gooseberry eyes wander over the priest's shabby dress, "what may you please to want?"

"I want your master, fellow," replied the Frenchman, with a voice of peculiar command, and an air that spoke authority.

"I don't think he will see you," said the servant, lowering his tone; "mistress has had a fit, and is very ill; but I'll see: what name shall I say?"

"Say that the man he sought is come."

"Walk into the hall, and I'll go and tell

him," said the lacquey, as he lounged lazily away.

"I had nearly forgotten myself," muttered the priest. "Name—have I a name? Curse on this poverty, see how the veriest cur of a lacquey despises me! But I must have a name; let it be, then, what the fool Chaumelin calls me—the Abbé."

The servant soon returned, and ushered the Priest into the presence of Sir Walter Conway. The Baronet was sitting by a blazing fire, with a table before him, on which were several decanters of wine and a plate of olives—for he was a true *bon vivant*, and repudiated the delicacies of a dessert as injurious to his port or burgundy. The Abbé was evidently not an unexpected guest, for a plate and glasses were placed opposite to the Baronet, and a cosy arm-chair wheeled up near the fire, within reach of them.

"Peace be unto this house," said the Priest, crossing himself as he entered the room.

"The Abbé Latouche, I presume? Will you excuse my not rising?" said the Baronet. "Take a seat, Sir, I beg, and help yourself, if your Order does not forbid it. The wine is old, and the olives new."

The Priest smiled scornfully, as he seated himself in the arm-chair, and pouring out a glass of wine, he said:

"It is my poverty, and not my Order that forbids it, Sir Walter; burgundy and I have met but rarely lately."

There was something in these few words, and in the manner in which they were spoken, which told the Baronet that this was the man he wanted—bold, unscrupulous, and poor—one who would gratify his senses and passions if his means would allow him. He had already hinted at his poverty, and showed that he was partial to the good things of this life, and this in one brief sentence.

Just the man for him. Yet he determined to proceed cautiously at first. But, flushed with

wine and new to the practice of dissimulation, the Baronet was no match for the Abbé, if the latter had been inclined to play a part.

As they sat opposite to one another before the cheerful fire, helping themselves at intervals liberally to the sparkling burgundy, the following conversation passed between them; the Baronet being the first to speak.

“ You must be aware, Monsieur l’Abbé, that I did not send for you on my own account. I think I mentioned in my note to you that there is a lady connected with me by marriage, who follows the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church ?”

“ You did, Sir Walter ; and I was much surprised at it.”

“ Why so ?”

“ Simply because I thought it strange that there should be a Catholic in a family so essentially Protestant. May I ask the lady’s name ?”

“ There is no need now of making a mystery

of it," thought the Baronet, "I may as well tell him. It is my late brother's widow; she is of your nation, and there was something romantic in her history, I believe; but as I do not know the facts, I cannot tell it."

"If you did, Sir Walter, I should not wish to hear it; reminiscences of the past are bitter things sometimes. But are you sure that she is of our holy religion? Has she seen any priest? Has she had a confessor? Such are yet to be found, for though hunted and persecuted, we still exist."

"No, I think not," answered the Baronet, venturing a terrible lie; "my sister-in-law is very timid, and has been of late years a dreadful invalid; but a few days ago she expressed a wish to see a minister of your creed: perhaps she is anxious to confess."

"Nay, that can hardly be under the circumstances, for I heard that the lady was already *in extremis*: if so, I have come too late; and

indeed, I ought to have convincing proof that she is not a heretic before I administer the rites of the Holy Church."

"She has not professed it openly, it is true, for the sake of her son, who is at Oxford; but there can be no doubt of the fact. She has a small oratory, and prays daily, kneeling before a crucifix. No Protestant does that."

"Even granting that, it is now too late for her to receive the extreme unction, that last holy rite of our Church, provided what your servants said is true; they told me their mistress was actually in the death agony."

"The babbling fools," thought the Baronet. "If this man is sincere there is no hope for me. I must be more open with him." He filled a bumper of burgundy, and drank it off.

"I will confess to you, Monsieur l'Abbé, that I wish most particularly that this lady should receive the last rites of your Church before she dies."

"It is impossible, Sir Walter, unless she recovers sufficiently to be sensible of their performance."

"I will give you five hundred reasons to make it possible, and five hundred more if it can be done before witnesses. Her own maid is a Catholic."

There was a pause, and they looked at one another steadily.

"My violet robe is there; and the consecrated oil is round my neck: and my assistant Chaumelin will be here presently," said the Abbé, slowly and distinctly.

"You consent then, my dear Abbé," exclaimed the Baronet, joyfully.

"My zeal for our Holy Church is so great," said the priest, sneeringly, "that if the lady is not dead already I will administer the last sacrament. But you must give me your reasons before I do it."

"I will write you them in gold, Monsieur

L'Abbé, or what is worth as much. Will you accept this trifle?"

"For the use of the poor, and the greater glory of God," said the priest, rising and taking a slip of paper which the Baronet handed to him across the table. It was a note for five hundred pounds.

"Will that remove your scruples? if so we will speak more openly, if you please."

"Your arguments are liberal, and your reasons convincing. I am now at your service."

"Are you really what you pretend to be—a priest of the Catholic religion?"

"That question comes rather late, Sir Walter; but to my sorrow I am a priest, and a poor priest, too, but I was not always so. Strange as it may sound to you, I have sat in high places, been caressed by haughty dames, and kissed the hand of royalty. I was proud then, but my pride was destined to be lowered. First came humiliation, then poverty; faugh! those

yelping *sans culottes*, how they howled and snarled till they had hunted us out of Paris."

"Cannot you enjoy yourself in London as well?"

"It might be tolerable, had I the means to make it so; but to live in this desert without money is hard to bear."

"You shall never want it, my dear Sir, if I succeed through your means; that *trifle* is but an earnest of what I will do when my end is accomplished."

At this moment a servant opened the door, and announced one of the King's physicians. He appeared a little surprised at seeing a shabbily dressed man sitting familiarly at the same table with the fashionable Baronet, but he was a man of courtly manners, and when Sir Walter introduced the Abbé as an old friend whom he had not seen for years, he returned the priest's haughty bow graciously, and offered his diamond-studded snuff-box. The Baronet

pressed him to be seated, but he declined, and remained standing by the table.

“How is your patient?” said the Baronet.

The physician shook his head, and took a pinch of snuff before he replied, “She is very ill, indeed. It is a stroke of paralysis, and I fear that she cannot recover from it, for her constitution has been broken for years.”

“So much the better,” thought the Baronet. “This will be a sad blow to her only son, poor fellow! I sent for him before you arrived, but I fear he will come too late.”

“He will,” said the physician, solemnly. “There is indeed no hope; Mrs. Conway will die to-night.”

“This is sad, indeed. Has she spoken? has she recovered her senses?”

“She was in a state of coma when I arrived, but before I left there was evidence of a partial return of the senses, and her lips moved. By

” continued the physician, stooping

down and whispering in the Baronet's ear, "I did not know that Mrs. Conway was a Catholic."

Sir Walter looked at him with astonishment, and hardly suppressed an exclamation ; but said quickly, in a low voice, "I have known it for some time?"

"I was, I confess, taken by surprise," resumed the physician, in a hurried whisper, "when standing by her side, I saw her making signs for me to stand back. I turned round, and there was an ivory cross with a Christ crucified on it. She moved her head so as to get a view of it, and was evidently praying to it, for her lips moved, and I think she tried to cross herself. Excuse my rudeness in whispering, but I did not like to say this before a stranger."

The King's physician then took out his watch, looked at it, shook his head, as if he had said too much, bowed, and saying he would

be back in an hour, left them again *tête-à-tête*.

Whilst the whispering was going on, the priest had fallen into deep thought. What could be the Baronet's motive in making his sister-in-law appear a Catholic? that there was some great stake at issue could not for a moment be doubted; for it was not in nature that a Protestant gentleman should give five hundred pounds for the performance of a Roman Catholic ceremony, without some commensurate advantage to accrue from it; and had he even been a sincere member of the priesthood, it was only gathering a stray sheep into their fold at a small sacrifice of conscience. Altogether it seemed an easy way of coining money without much risk or trouble; and as the Baronet had been liberal, he determined to carry it through with the best appearance that he could make under the circumstances; but to do this it would be necessary to call in the assist-

ance of the lady's-maid, who was a Catholic.

What the physician had said startled Sir Walter; it was un hoped-for and unexpected. Such evidence would weigh more than anything the man he had already paid could do. It was an annoying thought, but he had gone too far to retreat. There was every prospect of success, if his sister-in-law did not recover sufficiently to speak. Her son might arrive by noon on the next day. If, however, what the physician said was correct—and why not?—he would come too late; but, to make assurance doubly sure, he resolved to play the great game—the priest should administer the rites before witnesses. Thus they both came to the same conclusion, and nearly at the same moment.

It was soon settled; and the priest, unrolling his bundle, clothed himself in his violet-coloured robe. The maid, who was in attendance on her dying mistress, was sent for hurriedly, and the

Abbé conversed with her apart for a few minutes. The maid, being a Catholic, was easily convinced that what was to be done was for the good of her mistress's soul, particularly as it never occurred to her that there could be any sinister object in the performance of a holy sacrament. The priest, therefore, having requested that he might be informed when his assistant arrived, ascended with her to the chamber of the dying lady.

Hardened must that man be, who can enter the chamber of the dying, without feeling some emotion, some softening of the heart, some awakening of the small, still voice of conscience !

Go, watch the breath fleeting from the living body, gasp by gasp—the candle of life flickering dimly in its socket, fainter and fainter—the wandering eye fixing at last on vacancy, the calm gliding into death !

Go, watch the maniac ravings, the fierce

strugglings, the clenched hands, the heaving breast, the starting eyeballs, the fierce passion of death, and think that they are the same.

“Death but shuts the life of man,
To open with a wider span,
The gates of immortality.”

It is said that the death of the righteous is peaceful, and that of the wicked like a stormy sea, but experience teaches otherwise—they are both alike.

“I will exhort your mistress to confess, before she receives the last sacrament,” said the priest to the agitated maid, as they entered the chamber; “leave us alone, but remain within call.”

A single wax candle, burning dimly, stood on a small marble table, shedding a faint light on the furniture of the room; but the priest's eyes did not wander.

He approached the bed, and drew back the heavy curtains gently, with a tremulous hand,

and gazed for a few minutes at the pallid countenance of the dying woman.

Her eyes were wide open, and upturned towards heaven, but there had spread already over them a glassy film, and they moved not.

Her lips were closed, and round them flickered a faint, sweet smile, that spoke—

“Of peace and rest, and innocence serene.”

She did not gasp or moan, but lay there like an alabaster figure, still and motionless, and as spotless and pure. Nothing indicated that the breath of life was still in that fair, emaciated frame, but a scarcely perceptible movement of the nostril, so slight, that the priest at first thought that he had come too late, and that she was already dead.

But, as he looked at that pale, seraphic countenance, across which Death was fast spreading his veil of apathy, over his own there came a fierce and sudden change, and he stood

there like one struck by an electric shock. Then he stooped down and gazed at her, as if he would read every feature, and raised with shaking hand a tress of the long hair which lay loosely and carelessly on the pillow, as if scarcely belonging to the form that had once been so proud of it.

The hair had been formerly of a bright golden colour, but now appeared dull, and streaked with grey.

Still, the priest seemed to recognise it, and for a moment his features relaxed, his eye dilated, and the fierce, stern look gave way to one of unutterable love. His lips parted, and he murmured one word : " Eugenie ! "

It was like the lull in the middle of the hurricane.

Darker and darker grew the expression of his face, denoting the storm within his breast. Pent up for years, it seemed now about to burst forth in all its fury, to sweep away everything in its

headlong course. Yet he restrained it with an iron will. He could not vent it upon the speechless, inanimate form of her who lay upon that bed. No; he must reserve it for some living object. Woe unto him upon whom that long-smothered hurricane of vengeance should fall !

So occupied was the priest with this dark and ominous thought, that he scarcely heard a knock at the door.

The dying woman's maid entered, and told him that the physician had returned.

" Say unto him, my daughter, that the minister of the Holy Church is with her, about to administer the last sacrament, that she may not appear before her God unannaled. She is confessing her sins, and will soon be ready to depart in peace."

The woman hesitated, but the priest quickly shut the door, and turned again into the room.

As he did so, he, for the first time, perceived

a singular piece of furniture that stood on the small marble table where the wax-light was burning.

It was a figure of our Saviour, crucified. The cross was of ivory, curiously inlaid with ebony and gold; the figure of solid silver, beautifully chased, and nailed to the cross with golden nails, headed by diamonds. The form was so life-like, and the chasing so elegant, that none but a perfect master-hand could have wrought it. It was, indeed, the work of an artist, for on the back was written, in silver nails :

"BENVENUTO CELLINI TO THE CARDINAL PIETRA."

The cross stood on a small rosewood stand, on a panel of which were two small, though exquisitely-finished paintings, separated by scroll-work. The one on the left hand represented a man on horseback, with a visor over his face, snatching a child from a struggling female, with

a young and handsome cavalier lying bleeding at her feet. In the distance was a wood, with some figures on horseback emerging from it. The other was more simple, containing only a beautiful girl, with long, golden hair, kneeling in a supplicating posture at the feet of a dark-browed Cardinal, in his scarlet robes. There was a scroll at the foot of each compartment. On the left :

“WOE TO THE OPPRESSORS.”

On the right :

“COMFORT YE THE MOURNERS.”

The feet were of richly-chased scroll-work, with a tree growing out of a rock, embossed on the silver, and between them and the pictures there was a small drawer, the key-hole of which was a pierced pearl.

It was as pretty a little shrine as ever a fair devotee bowed the knee to.

The priest looked at it with mingled admira-

tion and curiosity, but, when his first surprise was over, and he examined it more minutely, the same dark flash which the features of the dying woman had called up, again passed over his countenance.

The left-hand panel excited a sinister smile, but his brow contracted with fierce passion when his black, glittering eyes became fixed on the other.

"It was you, then, my Lord Cardinal" muttered the priest, in a deep, smothered, husky voice,—“it was you, then, who stood betwixt me and my love—my love and my vengeance! You—the Cardinal!—one of the shining lights of our Holy Church, who sheltered and protected the fugitive heretic! Anathema!—Maranatha! Be thou accursed! But thou art dead, and my curses are unavailing!” added he, with concentrated bitterness.

Oh, it was a terrible sight! The priest—the holy man—the messenger of peace—gnashing

his teeth, and cursing the dead from the foul depths of his heart, before the figure to which his knee ought to have bowed in humble adoration ! and this, too, in the chamber of the dying ! It was terrible to hear, instead of the heart-felt prayer, that fearful anathema from the lips of him who should have brought tidings of consolation to the departing soul !

Now, for the first time, the priest perceived a small golden key, hanging by a thread of twisted hair from an arm of the cross. Was it curiosity alone, or did he expect to find in the drawer some precious relic, that he opened it ?

The slight grating of the lock in the silence of the chamber startled him, and he paused and turned his head round, as if the thought of sacrilege had passed before him. Then he went and bolted the door, returned with stealthy pace, drew back the curtains of the bed again, and listened intently, to hear if the dying lady still breathed. As he stooped over her, her lips

parted, and she murmured in a whisper, sweet and plaintive as the sighing of the wind amidst the aspen leaves :

“My son ! my son !”

The voice, low as it was, seemed to him to echo through the room. The words rang in his ears painfully ; they went back—far, far back—from the present time, into the dreamy past ; they recalled to his memory something that made his eyes flash fire, his limbs tremble, and his breath come shorter and quicker. He wished to hear more, in spite of his agitation, but the invalid’s eyes remained fixed, and her lips closed again. He turned away, and went back to the crucifix, and took from the drawer a small flat purse, such as the Moors make, of crimson velvet, embroidered with gold. There was a folded paper enclosed in it. Was it some charm against the evil eye, or something more holy, thus carefully preserved ?

The priest opened the paper, and read its

contents. The effect on him was strange: at first he appeared perfectly paralyzed; then a mocking smile passed over his countenance, as he said, "Chaumelin would call this a special act of Providence, and thank God for it; but I am not such a hypocrite—I call it chance, and thank myself; but whichever it be, chance or Providence, *my* object is attained. The book is open before me, and I can read it." As he said this, the priest returned the purse to the drawer, shut and locked it, and hung the small key again on the arm of the cross; but placed the paper carefully about his own person, and went back again to the bedside.

Even in those few brief moments a visible change had taken place in the countenance of the invalid. Death was creeping on slowly, but surely, foreshadowing with unmistakable signs his fearful advent. The priest perceived that her end was near: he went hastily to the toilette-table, took up a pair of scissors, and, returning

to the bed, cut off a tress of that beautiful golden hair, and placed it in his bosom. Was there love or hate in this simple act? When he had done this, he rang the bell sharply, and desired the maid who answered it to let the physician know that a sudden change had taken place, and that her mistress was evidently dying; and he requested her to send up his assistant directly, if he had arrived, lest it should be too late to administer the extreme unction.

This done, the priest, having deposited the phial of consecrated oil on the little marble table, placed himself in an attitude of humble prayer, before the crucifix. The physician entered, followed by the maid and a sickly-looking, middle-aged man, dressed in a black soutane, and carrying a cross, a small vase of holy water, and a sprinkling-brush. He wore a tonsure, and his look was downcast and depressed. As they came into the room, the priest rose and bowed lowly to the physician,

who returned it slightly ; not recognising, in his surplice and violet robes, the shabbily-dressed man whom he had seen sitting by the Baronet's fire.

" I fear the lady is in the death agony," said the priest, addressing the physician in French, as he approached the bed and looked at her now agonized countenance. Her jaw had fallen, her eyes were fixed on vacancy, and her small white hands were clutching nervously at the bed-clothes.

The physician turned away sorrowfully, and said : " You are a minister of the Catholic religion, I presume, Sir, by your dress : if so, perform your offices quickly, for in a few minutes she will have ceased to breathe."

Chaumelin lighted a consecrated taper at the wax-light. The Abbé, with the holy water brush, sprinkled the pillow and face of the invalid, repeating the prayer commencing "*Pro-ficiscere anima Christiana ;*" then he took

the silver crucifix, and held it to her lips to kiss.

He bowed his head down over her : in doing this, with a convulsive effort, the dying lady started up in her bed, and, with a low but agonizing shriek, that pierced the ears of all, she cried : " My son ! my son ! " Then her head sank slowly back upon the pillow, and her sad soul separated from her wasted body.

In that last moment upon earth, she had recognised the countenance of the priest, which, in truth, bore a strange resemblance to the face of the man in the left-hand panel, who was carrying off the child.

" *Requiescat in pace,*" said the Abbé, agitated violently, in spite of himself : he, however, whispered something to Chaumelin, and hurried hastily from the room.

The maid closed the ghastly eyes of the corpse, shedding many tears, and lamenting bitterly the loss of her dear mistress. The

physician, accustomed to scenes of death and misery, remained a minute or two as if watching whether life was really extinct; then, dashing away a tear, he took a pinch of snuff, and left the room. The assistant, Chaumelin, placed a small cross on her breast, between her hands, the vase of holy water and the sprinkling-brush at her feet, and knelt down by the bedside.

CHAPTER IV.

THERE is no doubt something fascinating in crime, particularly when an ascendancy over another being may be gained by its commission, in conjunction with the temporary gratification of the passions which ensues ; but when to this is added satisfaction for injuries real or imagined, when the cup of vengeance is placed ready to the hand of him who thirsts for it, can he, who has already tasted its contents, refrain from draining it to the bottom ?

As the priest descended the stairs, such

reflections as the following occurred to his mind: "When I entered this house I was poor and needy, I am now rich and can gratify my passions. A few hours ago I was held in no estimation by a miserable lacquey, I have now power over the master; I, the persecuted, can persecute, for have I not the means of vengeance; and shall I, the despised, the rejected one, not use them? She called upon her son—which? What matters it, do I not hate them, loathe them both? are they not the offspring of her who treated me with scorn and contumely, changing my deep love into burning, everlasting hate, and scathing this heart with unquenchable fire? Nothing now impedes me, I am free—free to pursue my course. Eugenie, didst thou think when I snatched thy first-born from thy panting bosom that my vengeance was satisfied?" and he laughed a bitter, scornful laugh. "No; it lives, it lives. Though thou art gone, thine image survives in thy son. I will blast his hopes, I will thwart him in all he under-

takes. He shall be a bastard, and thy memory shall be dishonoured for ever. And what has given me this power? Chance. Through this little scrap of paper, casually obtained, I will work my way into a new life. I will be no longer the poor persecuted priest, but once more the fashionable, the sought-after, Marquis de Charolles. Shall I give this paper up to the besotted man who has employed me in this business? I scarcely know its value yet, though I can guess it. I must worm the whole secret from him, and then vengeance and pleasure."

As he muttered the last words to himself over and over again, the priest knocked at the door of the room where he had left Sir Walter sitting by the fire, and was desired to come in. He found the Baronet exactly in the same position that he had left him in, nor indeed had he stirred during the priest's absence, but had remained gazing at the fire in a dull, abstracted mood, stupified and fixed by the consciousness

of crime, and scarcely daring to think; but the return of the priest aroused him at once.

"Well, Monsieur l'Abbé," said the Baronet, impatiently; "have you done what we agreed upon?"

"No, Sir Walter," replied the priest, deliberately, "I have not—it was, as I feared, too late—the lady is dead."

"Dead!" almost screamed the Baronet, falling back in his chair; "then I am a ruined man—ruined in purse, ruined in reputation."

"Not quite, Sir Walter," said the priest, after a short pause. "Do you bear much regard for the young man you sent for—your nephew, I believe?"

"Do you think that a man who stands on the brink of a precipice, kisses the hand of the one who would and will push him over?"

"No; but he would be grateful to him who would stretch his hand out to snatch him from it."

The drowning man catches at straws. There was something in the priest's words and manner that gave the Baronet a vague hope that all was not yet lost, and he looked inquiringly at the Abbé.

"Now, Sir Walter, what would you think if I said that I could prove this young man illegitimate—a bastard, in fact?" then he corrected himself, "I do not mean to say that I can do so at the present, but I have obtained a clue which may lead to that result."

"I would call you my guardian angel," cried the Baronet, eagerly.

Strangely perverted term, as if an angel could be the despoiler of the orphan, the trader of the innocent! But would not the murderer call the man by the same title who sheltered and concealed him and his crime from the world, and gave him the means of existence?

"I am to understand, then," continued the

priest, "that you have but little affection for your brother's son and his widow's memory?"

"Just such love as Macbeth bore to Duncan. I do not know, Monsieur l'Abbé, whether you read our Shakspeare, but if you remember these lines, you can apply them ;

'That thou would'st highly that would'st thou holily,
Would'st not play false, and yet would'st wrongly win.'

You have no doubt perceived that there is something to be won ; and I will now tell you what it is, that you may thoroughly understand this business."

The Baronet then narrated the sudden death of Sir William Deverell, his strange will, the enormous wealth that would pass into other hands than his, although he was heir-at-law, by the wording of it, unless the deceased lady could be proved to be a Roman Catholic. The embarrassment of his affairs in consequence of

relying on obtaining at least a portion of the Deverell estates ; in fact, that he was a ruined man if they should fall to his nephew and not to him.

The Abbé listened attentively, and when Sir Walter had finished, said :

“ May I ask what it was that the physician so mysteriously communicated to you ? ”

The Baronet repeated what the physician had whispered to him.

“ Do you not think there is sufficient evidence to prove that Mrs. Conway was a Catholic ? ” inquired the priest, hesitatingly.

“ No,” replied the Baronet, impatiently ; “ the evidence is only presumptive. Both judge and jury, being Protestants, would look upon it with suspicion ; nothing having been apparently done by her own act or free-will.”

“ That is unfortunate. What sort of young man is her son ? ”

“ He is clever, proud, and high-spirited ; but he has not what is commonly called a well-

regulated mind, for he has been left too much to himself."

"Does he, then, not love his mother much?"

"He has been away at school and college a great deal, and has spent most of his vacations with us, in Devonshire; and although his mother was generally there, she was always an invalid, and kept to her room; so that he has not seen so much of her as sons usually do; still he always loved her, and is proud of her high birth and noble family."

The thought of Arthur's attachment to his own daughter occurred to him at that moment, but that he reserved to himself for the present.

"Cause it to be whispered abroad," said the priest, in a hoarse, unnatural voice, for the struggle had commenced, "that Mr. and Mrs. Conway were never married; that is, not legally married; for rumour, with her pointed tongue, will soon bring it to the first point."

"What good will that do, if we cannot prove it?"

"Leave that to me, Sir Walter ; I will undertake to prove it, if necessary. He will hear this, he will inquire into it, he shall find that there is strong evidence to that effect, which, if produced, might blast his mother's fair fame. Then, if I can read human nature, and this young man is such as you describe him to be, he will not go to law at all. The memory of his mother must be sacred, and he will not like to run the chance of its being defamed, openly defamed in a court of law, which it must necessarily be, if a trial takes place ; but it must come upon him by degrees. If you are rash, and threaten him with proceedings at once, he will kick against it like a young colt, harnessed and put into the shafts without any previous preparation."

"I cannot see my way through all this ; it is too complicated for me," said the Baronet, impatiently.

“ The light will dawn upon you, Sir Walter, from a quarter where you least expect it,” replied the priest; “ but I must take the liberty of asking you some more questions. Do you know where Mr. and Mrs. Conway were married ?”

“ I have always understood that the ceremony was performed at the British Embassy, at Naples, after they had fled from Rome.”

“ It would be as well to ascertain that fact, for I have a shrewd suspicion that they were not so married. Does her son think you know more about it ?”

“ I believe not. A son does not usually inquire into his mother’s marriage certificate. But, Monsieur, what do these questions tend to ?”

“ Pardon me, Sir Walter; if I am to proceed any further in this affair, you must look upon me as your legal adviser. Depend upon it, I have my reasons for asking them.”

The Baronet motioned to him to go on, for

he did not see how he could gain his point without the priest's help ; and there was evidently something known to him beyond what he had yet said.

" You are certain they were not married in England ?"

" Yes."

" What became of them after they left Naples ?"

" They passed some months, I believe, in Switzerland, and embarked at Hamburgh for England. Mrs. Conway was then *enceinte*. They suffered shipwreck on the Norfolk coast, and there this young man was born. But her health never recovered the shock, and she had no more children."

The priest mused for a short time, and said to himself, " If they were married at Hamburgh, they must have wanted to quiet some scruples of conscience. They were either not married at Naples at all, or were married under false names."

CHAPTER V.

IN the spring of the year 1795, not long after that ferocious but extraordinary character Victor Hugues had carried ultra-republican notions and cruelties into the Caribbean islands, there lay at anchor, off the beautiful island of Dominica, a huge lumbering vessel. Although separated from her convoy, she had managed to elude the swarms of privateers as well as of men-of-war which the French commissioner with wonderful activity had congregated in those seas to attack the possessions and harass the commerce of the "tyrant George."

Guadaloupe, retaken from the English, was now the head-quarters of this worthy delegate from the Convention, and from thence he published the following edict, which will give some idea of the tone assumed by these ultra-tyrannical republicans.

PROCLAMATION OF VICTOR HUGUES.

LIBERTY—LAW—EQUALITY.

“VICTOR HUGUES, delegated Commissary of the National Convention to the Windward Islands. Whereas, the crimes committed by the British officers as well in the capture as in the defence of the conquered islands, exhibited a character of so consummate and odious a villainy, as not to be paralleled in history; and whereas, the rights of humanity, of war, and of nations, have been violated by Charles Grey, General; John Jervis, Admiral; Thomas Dundas, Major-General and Governor of Gua-

daloupe ; Charles Gordon, a general officer ; and other subaltern officers who imitated them ; and whereas, also the robberies, murders, assassinations, and other crimes committed by them, ought to be transmitted to posterity, it is resolved, that the body of Thomas Dundas interred in Guadaloupe, 3rd of June (slave style), shall be taken up, and given a prey to the birds of the air ; that upon the same spot there shall be erected, at the expense of the republic, a monument, bearing on one side this decree ; and on the other, the following inscription : ‘ This ground, restored to liberty by the bravery of republicans, was polluted by the body of Thomas Dundas, Major-General, and Governor of Guadaloupe for the * * * * George III. In recollecting his crimes, the public indignation caused him to be taken up, and has ordered this monument to be erected to hand them down to posterity.’

“ Given at the Port of Liberty, (20th

Frinaire) in the third year of the French Republic, one and indivisible.

“VICTOR HUGUES.

“Viel-Secretary.”

There was a peculiar look about this ship as she lay a little to the northward of the then busy little town of Roseau, or Charlotte Town, heaving lazily to the long unbroken swell. She was high out of the water, wall-sided, with huge bluff bows, and square stern; her yards were badly squared; her dirty sails, half furled, hung in loose and ungraceful disorder; the ropes were badly coiled or towing overboard. She could not be a merchant vessel for she bore a pendant, and her slovenly appearance precluded the idea of her being a man-of-war. A white number painted on her bow told the initiated that she was what sailors commonly call a lobster-box, and what soldiers curse as a hell upon the waters, a transport. A few light

canoes, manned by grinning negroes, were passing from her to the shore, laden nearly to the water's edge with red-uniformed soldiers, some of whom were already ranged on the white beach, while others were scrambling up amongst the rocks and shingle as the receding wave left the canoe stranded for a moment.

At the gangway nearest the island, sedulously watching the men as they stepped into these frail conveyances, stood a young officer in the uniform of the line of that time. He seemed young, very young for his station, for he wore the two epaulets denoting that he already bore a Captain's commission. His features were small and regular, his complexion delicately fair; a profusion of light-brown hair curled over his well-formed head; his eyes were of soft, sweet blue, shaded by dark eyelashes; altogether his face might have been deemed feminine, but for the strong determination expressed in his small but beautifully-chiselled mouth. He was rather over the middle height; and his frame so beau-

tifully proportioned, and so well put together that, although at first sight he might have appeared small and delicate, yet when you began to notice the wonderful symmetry of each limb, and the unanimity (if we may so express it) of the whole, it was no longer a matter of surprise that this apparently slight young man could perform extraordinary feats of strength and activity. There was something very remarkable in his countenance, for although his complexion was youthfully fair, and his eye bright and joyous, a slight shade of melancholy at times pervaded the whole; even when occupied as he then was in landing his men with safety, it passed over his features like the shadow of a cloud over the sunny landscape.

The last canoe had put off from the ship, the soldiers had all reached the shore without an upset, and the sharks were defrauded of all chance of a feast for that day at least; and, although an occasional ducking as the soldiers tumbled out of the rickety canoes on to the

slippery rocks had served to make the grinning negroes show their huge white teeth, and chuckle at the buckra men getting wet, no casualty of any consequence had occurred : the young officer turned away from the gangway with a deep-drawn sigh. In the blue translucent water he had seen a gaunt monster hovering about near the ship, in evident expectation of a banquet. Not many hundred yards from the vessel the half-putrid carcass of a bullock was perceptibly torn, worried and dragged about by a host of smaller sharks ; but this one, as if he despised so mean a feast, seemed to watch each canoe as it put off from the vessel until it reached the shore, and all this time he was distinctly visible to the anxious eyes of our hero, but when the last canoe ran high upon the shingly beach in safety, the monster suddenly disappeared beneath the vessel, and could be no more seen.

As Arthur Conway turned towards the quarter-deck, he felt his mind relieved of a great burden ; yet he shuddered as the dim

outline of the horrible shark still swam blue-ly and mistily before his eyes, and he still felt sick and dizzy. Before he had quite recovered his self-possession, he heard a voice, musical, low, and sweet, but in a mixture of broken French and English, imploring to know why he was to be flogged.

"I'll teach you, you infernal black nigger!" said the rough voice of the master of the transport, whose name was Jack Diver, but who generally went by the *soubriquet* of "Gentleman John," probably because he was the very reverse of that often wrongly-bestowed title, "I'll teach you, you thieving blackbeetle, to come on board His Gracious Majesty's ship 'Sally' without my leave! You larned your manners, no doubt, from them impudent Frenchmen; but we'll see if an English cat can't change 'em. Here, bostwain's mate, give this fellow a dozen,—the thieves' cat mind!"

"Ay, ay, sir!" replied that worthy, grinning from ear to ear with delight at the prospect of

trying his hand on something new. "No need to order him to strip."

Three or four of the brawny sailors had laid hold of him in the meantime, and were in the act of seizing him to some of the rigging, as the young officer turned from the gangway.

Arthur Conway saw at a glance that this man, whatever he might be, was no negro.

As he has rather a conspicuous part to play in some of the scenes in this tale, we will now attempt to give our readers his portrait at full length.

His body, which was nearly naked, was straight, and well-proportioned; his head was placed evenly and gracefully on his shoulders, which were broad, and yet low; his hips, too, were broad, but his limbs were slight and clean, though not deficient in muscle. His skin was of an olive-colour, not much darker than those of Murillo's Spanish boys. His eyes were small, and deeply sunk, but intensely black and piercing; his hair jet black, and perfectly straight; his nose

flat and broad, not like that of a negro, however, for his nostrils were neither large nor distended; his facial angle was nearly that of the European, and his chin was small, though, like the rest of his face, it was round; nor were the cheek-bones high and prominent, as in the negro. The only feature which seemed to ally him to that race was the mouth, which was very wide, and full of large, white teeth; still, his lips had none of the African blubber about them. A line, or furrow, extended from each corner of the mouth to the ears, which were perforated with pieces of dark tortoise-shell. His face was, in other respects, perfectly smooth, and free from any sign of a beard, and his nose and under-lip had been evidently pierced like his ears, but there were no ornaments in them.

His dress was very simple, consisting only of a striped cotton shirt, without sleeves, reaching to the knee, and bound round the waist with a belt, covered with feathers. The rest of his

body, head, legs, arms, and feet, were utterly unprotected from the fierce glare of the tropical sun, and the lash of the brawny boatswain.

Although this man did not utter any actual lamentations, his features and manner did not display the stoical indifference to disgrace and physical pain so conspicuous in the Red Indian of the Western Continent of America. On the contrary, he seemed to be perfectly aware of what he was about to suffer, although pride evidently struggled to subdue all other emotions and exclamations than the simple interrogation, often repeated, of why he was to be flogged? He could not understand it, nor could the gallant young officer, whose attention now became suddenly fixed on the scene that was being acted before him.

The native, or whatever he might be, was now seized to the rigging; the sailors stood on each side of him, to prevent his freeing himself by his struggles; the ruffianly master of the transport stood by, smoking a cigar, waiting

impatiently for the play to commence; the sturdy boatswain, stripped to his shirt-sleeves, had already bared his brawny arms, and was passing his fingers through the tails of the formidable thieves' cat, and, balancing himself properly, was measuring his distance at the same time for the first stroke, when the captive, turning his head round, caught the eye of our hero.

There was something in it that gave him hope. Although his lips did not move, the expression of his face was of so beseeching a nature—so evidently appealing to the gentleman, that, though he did not speak, Captain Conway understood it. He walked forward, and, addressing the master of the transport in a courteous tone and manner, asked him what the man was to be flogged for?

"What is that to you?" replied the polite Jack Diver, with an oath. "I command this ship, don't I? so I'll thank you not to interfere

with me when I choose to punish a black scoundrel. Ha! ha! a pretty go truly! Here's a lobster disgusted at a little back tickling,—and only a nigger's hide to be tanned!"

"I beg your pardon, Captain Diver," replied the young officer; "this man is no negro; and, even if he were, I do not see why he should suffer such a punishment, without any apparent cause."

"What do I know of causes? Perhaps you would like to be president of a court-martial on the nigger! Lay on Andrews! One!—I'll be big drummer."

The boatswain's mate drew back, and flourished his cat scientifically.

"Stay!" interrupted Conway, "only one word. You would not have dared to do this, if Colonel Farrer had been on board."

"It's my turn now," said Jack Diver, with a sneer. "Thank the stars, I've emptied my pot of all the lobsters, big and little, for this

plunged, feet foremost, into the deep blue water. Ere the wave had closed over his head, Conway had rushed to the gangway, and, throwing a rope overboard, was in the act of following it himself, when he was rudely, though not ill-naturedly, restrained by the boatswain.

“Psha! Mister, you can’t drown them niggers—they swim like porpusses, and dive like ducks,” said he, shaking his cat at where he supposed the man to be.

“The shark! the shark! O God! the man will be killed. Can nothing be done to save him. This is too horrible!” exclaimed the young officer, striving to break from the boatswain.

Suddenly the man appeared on the surface of water, full fifty yards from the ship, and striking out boldly for the shore.

But at the same moment, an indistinct shadowy thing glided from beneath the vessel through the pellucid water, in the same direction.

"The shark! the shark!" again shouted Conway.

The man seemed to understand him, for he raised one hand out of the water, as if making some signal, then dived again far below the surface.

With intense anxiety the young officer watched for his re-appearance; even the Master and his men had suddenly become interested in his escape, for, cruel and unfeeling as they were, there was still some latent spark of compassion in their rough breasts, and every sailor detests the very name of a shark.

For nearly a minute and a half the man remained under water, and when he again reappeared, he was half-way to the beach.

How he had eluded the shark, could not be seen; but sure enough the tyrant of the deep had been disappointed in his expected banquet. Perhaps, like the lion and the tiger, when they miss their spring, the fish of prey, when he is foiled in his dash, returns skulking and sulky

to his lurking-place ; and so it seemed, for the grim shark sailed slowly back, scarcely moving his fins, to his stand beneath the shadow of the lumbering transport.

The head of the man just showed itself for a minute or two, and again he dived ; the next thing that was seen of him was his dripping figure scrambling up the shingly beach ; a moment more, and his form was lost amongst the rocks.

“ You may thank your God, if you ever do such a thing,” said Conway, in a low, soft tone, and turning to the Master, “ that this man’s blood is not upon your head.”

In these few minutes, Arthur Conway had confirmed to himself a bitter, implacable enemy, and had made a firm, sincere, though humble friend.

CHAPTER VI.

THREE days after the occurrence related in the last chapter, the 'Sally' was still lying at anchor in the roadstead off Roseau. This vessel had brought out detachments of troops from England for the different islands, to supply the fearful gaps made in the ranks of the British regiments by the bullets of the republicans, and by the still more deadly weapons of nature—the vomito and the dysentery.

After discharging her live lading, the 'Sally' was to take in a cargo of sugar, coffee, and other

produce, and then return to her port in England, as soon as a safe convoy could be procured. The lading had not yet commenced; everything on board was still, and no watch was kept.

An awning was stretched over the high poop-deck, and beneath its shade, swinging in a low hammock, with his face upturned to the sky, and his head luxuriously propped up with pillows, lay the Captain of the transport, smoking.

A bottle of old rum, with a wet napkin round it, and a porous earthenware jar, or monkey, as it is called, of cool water, with some fresh-gathered limes, stood within reach of his extended arm.

Jack Diver was apparently in that self-complacent mood, which a good glass of old liquor, a real havannah, and perfect indolence, creates under a tropical sky. His troubles and anxieties were over for the time being, and he thought that he might as well pass the time of in-

action in the luxurious manner we have described.

He had not gone on shore—why, it is difficult to say ; perhaps the threat of the young officer, perhaps the fear of infection, prevented him ; for, even at that season of the year, the terrible yellow fever was lurking about in the purlieus of the town. Yet this could scarcely be ; for, though a bully with his men, Jack Diver was no coward : he had already been distinguished, on several occasions, in severe encounters with the French privateers ; and, under ordinary circumstances, would have fought his ship until it sank. Nevertheless, he had not gone on shore.

As he lay there ruminating, a few broken sentences and exclamations burst at times from his lips, as he removed the cigar from his mouth, plainly indicating the train of thought that was passing in his mind.

“The young jackanapes ! To be bullied by a beardless boy, before my own men—my

own crew ; and by him, too, above all others—he who has done me so much injury already ! Does he know who I am ? Rot the young aristocrat ! And he threatened me, too ? Yes, by God ! I will be revenged on him yet. Shall they always grind us under their heels, the cursed tyrants ?” (Captain Diver, Captain Diver, you forget who are the real tyrants.)

“ As sure as the devil is — ”

“ Talk of the devil, and he is sure to appear, Captain,” said a voice with a slightly foreign accent, close beside him.

Whilst the Captain of the transport was lying in his hammock, a light and elegantly-shaped canoe, paddled by one man in the stern, with another lying at full length in the bottom of the fragile conveyance, came gliding by the town from the northward. It passed the stern of the ‘Sally,’ which was swinging with her head pointed to the light air from the land ; then it stopped, and hovered there for a few moments, as if uncertain whether it was the

right ship. Presently, with a few strokes of his paddle, the man in the stern whirled the canoe round, and shot her under the high counter of the 'Sally.'

The man in the bottom of the canoe rose up cautiously and silently, and seizing one of the ropes which was hanging carelessly over the sides of the slovenly vessel, swung himself up, hand over hand, peeped over the bulwarks, and then, with a satisfied air, crept quietly under the awning, on to the poop, and stood by the Captain's hammock. The man in the canoe paddled away again, but only to a short distance from the transport, and commenced fishing.

The man who now stood on the deck of the transport was dressed in a linen blouse, with a leather belt round the waist, and braided at the edges and pockets with three different colours. He wore duck trowsers, and light sailors' pumps, with silver buckles in them, and cut low, showing a pair of neat silk stockings. His

figure was slight and active. His shirt was open at the throat, which was completely hidden by a long, pointed, black beard; bushy whiskers, and a thick moustache, shaded his cheeks and upper lip; round his neck was carelessly knotted a silk handkerchief of three colours; and from his ears hung two splendid ear-rings. His nose was aquiline, and his eyes fierce and sparkling. A large Panama hat completely covered and shaded the upper part of his face: so that, between whiskers, beard, moustache, and hat, his whole countenance was in a sort of disguise.

His appearance was a strange mixture of dandyism and ferocity; a puppy of the first water turned pirate. He had overheard the half-muttered expressions of the Master, and they seemed sufficiently to suit his purpose, for he grinned significantly, and showed his fine white teeth beneath the dark bushy moustache, and shrugged his shoulders expressively as he chimed in with "Talk of the devil, and he is sure to appear."

The Master turned sulkily round in his hammock, for he was too lazy to be much surprised, and the old rum had rather deadened the keenness of his intellect; but when he saw the extraordinary figure by his side, he could not help starting as if he had in reality seen some Satanic emissary, for the grin was still on the stranger's countenance; but he quickly recovered himself, and said, in his usual bullying tone and manner:

"And who the devil are you? And what do you want?"

"I have come to offer you my services," replied the stranger, taking off his broad-leafed hat, and bowing to the Captain.

"I don't want your services: be off with you."

"Come, Captain," said the stranger, with the most perfect coolness, helping himself, at the same time, to a glass of rum from the bottle, and holding it up as men do when they

drink a toast, "Here's to you. Rot the aristocrats! Down with the tyrants! *Vive la République!*"

The Master of the transport rolled himself out of the hammock, sat up on the deck, and rubbed his eyes with astonishment; for he was by no means aware that he had spoken aloud.

"Yes," continued the stranger, "shall they still grind us under their heels? What say you, Captain?"

Jack Diver muttered a fearful oath. "Who are you, that you should read my thoughts? And why do you come here?"

"To be at your service, Captain. You know his infernal majesty—Bah! what am I saying?—I mean the chief commissary of the lower regions is generally at hand when wanted; and you were speaking of him just now, Captain."

"You don't mean to say —"

"Not exactly," said the stranger, with a

shrug: " I am Citizen Jean-Marie le Blanc ; so called, because I'm black till I change my features."

" Change his features !" murmured the half-intoxicated Master ; " he must be the devil himself, after all."

" Look you here, Captain," said the stranger, putting his hand suddenly to his face, and removing, in a second, whiskers, moustache, and beard, and leaving exposed the features of a very young and strikingly handsome man. " You see I only tell you the truth, though that's what the devil never did : I'm mortal, after all."

" Devil or man, what do want with me ?"

" You detest the aristocrats, Captain ?"

" Who are you ?"

" You would free yourself from the abominable tyrants ?"

" Tell me who and what you are, or I'll —"

" He threatened me too, Captain," interrupted the stranger, with a quiet sneer.

"Come, come, leave well alone, whoever you are," said Jack Diver, half petrified with astonishment; "I don't want to threaten you, but I do want to know who you are, and how you got on board?"

"One question is easily answered. You leave ropes towing overboard. The other depends on how you answer me."

"Come, you are the coolest chap I ever met with. I've half a mind to call the men, and see what you are made of. Why shouldn't I?"

"Because in the first place," replied the stranger, quietly drawing a small pistol from his pocket, cocking it, and presenting it at the master, "I should shoot you and then jump overboard—there is a canoe handy; and in the next place, because I want you, and you want me. Read this, Captain," continued the stranger, replacing the pistol in his breast, "read this while I smoke a cigar." And Le Blanc, for so we will in future call the stranger, handed a paper to the Captain, and

then seating himself quietly on the deck, lighted his cigar, and puffed away quite unconcernedly, whilst Jack Diver read with difficulty the document so strangely handed to him.

The paper which the Master was now reading, was one of those furious and malignant proclamations, issued by order of the Convention, through the medium of its worthy commissary, Victor Hugues, against the "tyrant George," and his satellites. It called upon the inhabitants of the different islands of all colours to rise, and throw off the yoke of the infamous English; it proclaimed those that did so citizens and soldiers of the Republic, and threatened with the guillotine all of French origin or extraction, who should serve in any way under the British Government, or who should not join the Republican army on its landing.

Le Blanc, though apparently taken up with his fragrant havannah, was all the while watch-

ing with great interest, the effect of this proclamation on the Master of the transport.

It seemed, however, rather to offend than please him, for with an oath Jack Diver crushed the paper in his hand, as he said :

“ What have I to do with Victor Hugs, or whatever you call him ; curse me, though I hate all aristocrats, I’m a downright John Bull, and look upon every Frenchman as a natural born enemy.”

“ Very true and very proper,” replied the Frenchman shrugging his shoulders, and elevating his eyebrows ; “ but, Captain, are there none of these aristocrats on whom you wish particularly to be revenged ?”

“ Yes, by God !” replied the Master, striking the hen-coop with his clenched fist, “ yes, there is one whose life blood I would suck drop by drop till he died.”

“ He told me the truth,” muttered the stranger to himself. “ I have him now.”

"What are you muttering about there, you French devil? Why don't you speak out, and tell me more? for more I am sure you know."

"Perhaps I do," said Le Blanc, with an air of mystery.

"Why not tell me at once without all this palavering?"

"I cannot explain it here, but if you will come on shore, Captain, I will show you, I think, how you can be revenged on him."

"How the devil do you know that he is on shore in this paltry island?"

"Exactly so."

"What do you mean by exactly so?"

"My black spirit told me."

"Well, you are the rummiest devil I ever saw."

"Light brown hair, blue eyes, fair complexion, slender, well-made, aristocratic," continued the stranger, with a pause between each of the descriptions.

More and more surprised, the Master gazed

open-mouthed at the stranger, who, knocking the ashes off the end of his cigar, quietly, yet significantly, added :

“ Will you come on shore now, Captain ?”

The Master mused for a few minutes. The prospect of revenge tempted him, heated as his imagination was by the potency of his draughts of rum, and he assented. Requesting the stranger to wait for him on the poop, whilst he went forward to make some arrangements with his mate, in case of any unexpected calls upon him during his stay on shore, he descended the poop-ladder, leaving Le Blanc alone.

The stranger went to the stern, and whistled shrilly. The man in the canoe drew up his fishing lines, and with a few strokes of his paddle, again shot the canoe under the high counter of the ‘ Sally.’

This man was dressed in a white jacket and loose linen trowsers, with a large straw hat flapped over his face. He seemed full of vigour and activity, and managed his canoe with beau-

tiful skill and address. When close to the vessel, Le Blanc stooped over the bulwarks, and asked, in a low tone, and in French: "Will it hold three?"

The man in the canoe held up three fingers, nodded, and pointed to another paddle lying in the bottom of the canoe, but did not speak.

In a few minutes, Jack Diver returned; he had taken the opportunity when below to plunge his head into cold water, and was consequently more sober than before.

"I have ordered a boat," said he, "to take us on shore."

"It is not at all necessary," replied Le Blanc, with a bow, "my gig is all ready here, and I have to request that you will do me the honour to take a seat in her."

"Where is she?"

"Here, Captain," replied Le Blanc, leading Jack Diver to the side, and showing him the canoe in which the man sat perfectly still, with

his head drooping forwards on his knees. "Take my word for it, you will find this the best and quickest conveyance, for we have some distance to go. My man, Henri, there, sends her along like the wind, when the water is smooth, as it is now; moreover, you must come with me, or not at all. If you are suspicious of me, stay; if you wish for revenge, come."

"What the devil do you want me to do?"

"Come and see, Captain. Revenge is sweet, as the book says."

The Master did not say another word, but lowered himself carefully into the canoe, and deposited himself, at full length, in the bottom; the stranger followed him, and, kneeling in the bow, took the second paddle. The man in the stern kept his head away, with his large hat flapped over his eyes as much as he could; but as the Master of the transport entered the canoe, a gleam of fierce delight flashed from his

black, expressive eyes, and he uttered a low laugh, in which you might have read revenge, and triumph, and scorn.

The canoe, impelled by skilful hands, soon emerged from the shadow of the 'Sally;' and with a graceful, gliding motion, it ran rapidly past the town of Roseau, the two rowers keeping measured time with their paddles.

The mouth of the beautiful emerald-green river, that gives the name to the town, is soon passed.

On, with the same even, graceful-gliding, they shoot over the surface of that lake-like sea, close to the beach, where the densely foliated tamarind-trees line the margin, in long, unbroken rows, contrasting beautifully with the snow-white sand.

Presently the land presented a bolder and rougher appearance; precipitous frowning cliffs, furrowed here and there with rugged water-courses, and dotted with quaintly foliaged plants

and shrubs, came boldly down nearly to the water's edge, just leaving a narrow, winding, rocky track, sufficiently wide for a horse to pass. Dark, misshapen rocks began to stud the glistening sand, and show themselves here and there with black, rough crests, peeping out from the green, translucent water, into which the rays of the sun seemed to penetrate far below the surface.

Still the canoe shot on, without a word being spoken, the splash of the paddles alone breaking the silence of the basking day, until round the boulder of a dark, red cliff they suddenly came, where a deep, sombre, narrow river glided noiselessly into the bosom of that glowing sea. With a whirl of his paddle, the man in the stern shot the light canoe into the stream.

Overshadowed, on both sides, by matted and tangled mangrove-trees, with branches interlaced, and drooping into the water, it seemed more like a deep, silent pool than the outlet of

a lovely river. Black masses of mud, now dried and baked by the scorching heat, appeared between the mangroves. Every now and then a huge, unearthly-looking iguana, with its scoloped back and long scaly tail, would glide, spectre-like, over them. Myriads of pestiferous mosquitoes and sand-flies buzzed and hummed busily, joying in a spot where the fierce glare never entered to disturb them in their mazy dance; but, beyond this, there was no animal life; it seemed the abode of solitude, of pestilence, and death.

For some distance, the canoe glided and twisted along the curvings of this Lethean stream, till the river began to move perceptibly, flowing over a harder bed; rocks began to usurp the place of the black, slimy mud, and daylight again penetrated through the branches of the mangrove-trees. The water, instead of the turbid, inky hue, assumed a shade of emerald green; and here and there a flake of snowy foam came floating and eddying along.

Presently the man in the stern motioned to Le Blanc to desist, and, with a single dextrous stroke of his own paddle, whirled the canoe suddenly round, up a small, narrow creek; bringing himself, at the same time, nearest the landing-place; and as the hollow cotton-tree grated lightly against the pebbles, he jumped nimbly out, and steadied the canoe with his hand.

"Here we are at last, Captain," said Le Blanc, wiping away the beads of sweat that stood on his brow. "Henri, help the Captain out."

The Master rose, and stretched out his hand towards Henri, to balance himself as he got out of the rickety conveyance; but the man seemed neither to hear his employer's words, nor to see the motion; for he kept his head turned away, although he still held fast the canoe.

"Is the fellow deaf or sulky?" said Jack Diver, crawling out by himself.

A gleam of satisfaction crossed the man's face, as he gave his hand to Le Blanc. It was trembling with emotion, and he murmured some words in an unknown language.

Le Blanc looked at him as if he would have read what was passing in his mind, but Henri assumed so stolid an expression, that the Frenchman, quick as he was, could make nothing of it.

The two ran the canoe up, and lifting it, placed it snugly under the shadow of the castor-oil plants and long waving weeds, that grew in wild luxuriance in the moist soil.

The Frenchman, then leading the way along a track which wound amidst the rocks and tangled brushwood, and whistling gaily as he went, seemed in high spirits; but some vague sense of uneasiness appeared to harass the Master, for he looked repeatedly round and behind him with a suspicious glance at the man who had paddled the canoe. In truth, he had an undefinable feeling of dread of this

man, and a semi-consciousness that he had in some way seen him before ; but the man followed him, carrying his paddle in his hand, with a slouching, careless gait, and appeared not to notice anything, but kept his large hat flapped over his face.

Jack Diver, as he went along, tried several times to question him, but he did not reply ; and Le Blanc explained it by saying that Henri did not speak English.

CHAPTER VII.

THEY had gone about half a mile, and were in the middle of a thicket, when the man suddenly disappeared: his step was so noiseless, that neither the Master nor the Frenchman perceived it. When they had passed through this thicket, the ground became clearer, and a house stood before them.

It was a low, one-storied building, built of wood, on a stone basement, with a verandah on all four sides, and closely jalousied. There were very few signs of cultivation about it;

only here and there a huge plantain or banana flapped lazily its vast spreading leaves, or a tall, stately cabbage-palm lifted its straight and tapering stem, crowned with its waving plume, drooping leaves, and singular spike, amidst a dense mass of weeds of strange forms and luxuriant growth.

The Frenchman knocked with a peculiar rap at the door, which was shut and barred ; it was slowly and cautiously opened, and a voice, in French, demanded who was there.

"Vive la République ! Liberté ! Egalité !" said the Frenchman, with his usual volubility.

"Is that you, Citizen Le Blanc ? Come in," said a savage-looking, tall Mulatto, whose grim, flat face appeared at the door, like Satan peeping from behind a tree.

"Who have you here, Lemantin ?"

"Jean Marinier, Père le Bar, Petun, two or three niggers, and myself. We expect the Chief directly, and several others."

"What news?"

"Good enough. The paper takes well: we shall have plenty more here directly. But who is that with you?"

"A new member; one who will be most useful to us."

"Has he taken the oath?"

"Not as yet; it will be necessary to deal cautiously with him at first."

"Well, come in."

The room was quite dark, for the jalousies were all drawn down and closed; and it was some time before the Master, coming as he did out of the glare of the day, could distinguish any objects. It is, perhaps, doubtful whether Jack Diver would have crossed the threshold at all, could he have distinctly seen the present inmates of this house, for, in truth, some of them were sufficiently repulsive; but it was now too late to draw back; for as soon as he and the Frenchman had entered, the door was imme-

diately pulled to, barred, and fastened by the Mulatto, who acted as door-keeper.

The conclave now assembled consisted of four or five of the French settlers of the island, half a dozen negroes, the Mulatto, Le Blanc, and the Master of the transport. Several of the negroes, nearly naked, were sprawling about, in a state of intoxication; whilst a horrid smell of rum and effluvium from their bodies pervaded the atmosphere. Those that were not drunk, were sucking pieces of sugar-cane, and jabbering together in broken French. The conversation amongst the rest was kept up in a desultory manner, the regular debate not having yet commenced; for they were waiting for the arrival of several other members of this strange convention.

The Frenchman and the Master seated themselves side by side on a box, that served for a sofa.

“It is true,” said the one named Le Bar, in

French, "that these cursed islanders have not more than a hundred regular troops, and that they are commanded by a mere boy. I saw them on parade, at Morne Bruce, myself, this morning."

"In a few days, is the festival of Les Roses and Les Marguerites; the niggers will be all together. What an opportunity that would be for a *grand coup*!" said another.

"You are decidedly wrong there, my friend," said Le Blanc, "for they would be prepared. Believe me, surprise is everything, just now."

"Ah!" said the Mulatto licking his lips, "I have my eyes on such a house—such a dear little black-eyed girl in it; *sacristie*, what an armful she would make."

"But you said, Citizen Le Bar," continued Le Blanc, "that the man who commanded the regulars was quite young—what was he like?"

"A handsome boy enough, fair-haired and

blue-eyed, just such a face as your creole girls rave about; but, for my part, I should like to see it grinning in the saw-dust; Mamselle Guillotine would kiss it nicely."

Le Blanc nudged the master with his elbow. "Do you understand, Captain, what Citizen Le Bar is saying?"

"No; I don't understand your cursed jabber."

"He was describing your young friend, the aristocrat; it seems he commands the regulars at Morne Bruce—what an opportunity for revenge!"

"I don't see that at all; when a man is backed by his red coats, he is difficult to get at; besides, I tell you once for all, that I won't lift a hand against my own countrymen, if that's what you want."

"No, we don't want you to do that; but you can be the means of his disgrace, and disgrace to an aristocrat like him is worse than death."

"I see, you want to make a cat's-paw of me; why don't you do it yourself?"

"Because he would suspect me, and I can't get the opportunity; but from one sailing under the same flag, he would suspect nothing."

"How is it to be done?"

"Simply by giving him false information, which you can easily contrive to do?"

"But that might endanger the safety of the island; and though I hate all aristocrats, and would see all men equal, I tell you again, I will do nothing against my own countrymen."

"As you please, Captain; but don't you see that you have already put your foot into a trap; if you really meant nothing, why come on shore with me—this company, I assure you is dangerous. I have only to point at you, and say 'Aristocrat,' and you would see how their bristles would rise."

“ Devil as you are, you surely would not do that ?”

“ Why not ?” replied Le Blanc, quite coolly ; “ if I were to let you go quietly now—if indeed I could do it at all—what is to prevent you from informing against us ? Help me to revenge, and I will help you.”

“ But tell me why you want to destroy this youngster. Is it simply because he is an Englishman and an aristocrat ?”

“ No, my dear Captain, no—those are only secondary causes,” replied Le Blanc, after a moment’s thinking. “ No, but because I hate him as you do.”

“ How can that be ?” inquired the master, with surprise.

“ Because he has already robbed me of my mistress ; the fairest girl in all Dominica ; curses on him—perhaps he has done the like to you, Captain.”

This was said at random.

A deep burning flush passed over the Master's countenance, and a half suppressed groan burst from his lips, but he did not reply.

"Shall these fair-haired aristocrats rob us of our mistresses, Captain, as they do of our rights?"

"No; by all the powers in hell, I am yours," said Jack Diver, holding out his fevered hand to the stranger, who grasped it with apparent cordiality,

"Will you take the oath then, Captain? it may rather surprise you."

"Anything—everything; give me but revenge."

"You shall have it; you and I together."

Three or four more settlers, and several coloured men, negroes, mulattoes, and quadroons had by this time dropped in.

"Where is the Chief?" inquired Le Blanc of one of them.

"He will be here directly; he is only wait-

ing to make a proper *entrée*," replied one of the new comers, with a sneer.

There came another knock at the door. The Mulatto opened it, and a singular figure presented itself, and stalked with measured strides into the centre of the room. This man, whose skin was of a dark olive colour, with piercing deep-sunken black eyes, and straight jetty hair, was nearly naked, except that around his waist, and reaching to the middle of his thighs, there hung a kind of tunic covered with the orange-coloured feathers of the bird called the cock of the woods, and the bright scarlet ones from the curry-curry. On his head was a small hat, or rather coronet, composed of the brilliant plumage of the humming-birds, the macaw, the parroquet, and the toucan; rings of gold were passed through his ears, and the cartilage of his nose; a large flat crescent of polished copper, encased in some dark hard wood, attached to a string, on which were threaded seeds of a bright

red colour, mixed with pieces of coral, depended from his neck to the middle of his chest; copper bracelets encircled his arms; and just above the knee were bands covered with the same red seeds as those round his neck; in other respects he was completely naked.

He waved his hand gracefully as a salute to all present, and sat down on a seat without speaking a word.

"Who is this man?" said Jack Diver, in a whisper to Le Blanc. "I think I have seen him before."

"I should think not; Captain Baron is not often seen, I assure you," replied Le Blanc; "it is only on such rare occasions as these that he shows himself."

"Still, I can't help thinking so."

"Hush!" interrupted Le Blanc, "the proceedings of the meeting are about to commence."

The tall Mulatto, whose name was Lemantín, acted as master of the ceremonies.

By his arrangement the tables were cleared away from the centre of the room, and the conclave formed into a ring round it: all those who were not absolutely drunk, standing up. One of those magnificent white lilies, with a bright golden centre, indigenous to the island, was produced and laid on the floor in the middle of the ring. The Mulatto then brought forward a stool, covered with a silken flag of three colours—blue, white, and red—and placed a square, polished mahogany bow on it, with great respect.

“All is now ready,” said Lemantin; “let those who have not taken the oath stand forward.”

Le Blanc interpreted his words to the Master, and added, “Will you flinch now? Remember—revenge!”

“No! I will take the oath, were it to send me to hell this moment,” replied the Master, eagerly.

“Stand forward boldly then, and do as I

do, and say what I say. I will interpret for you."

The Master walked into the middle of the ring.

"Citizen Diver is ready," said Le Blanc; "he does not understand French, but I will explain everything to him."

"It is well," said all the conclave in reply; "Citizen Le Blanc is to be trusted—proceed."

"You see that lily on the floor, citizen," said the Mulatto, placing his hand on Jack Diver's shoulder, "spit upon it."

Le Blanc interpreted his words. The Master obeyed, although it must be owned with a bad grace.

"Trample it under your feet."

Jack Diver did so with a better will, although he was sorely puzzled to know what all this could mean.

The Mulatto then approached the stool, bringing the Master close to it, and touching a spring, the lid of the box flew open.

Jack Diver started back in astonishment and dismay, for it disclosed to his sight the perfect model of a guillotine with the knife upraised ; the figure of a man, bare-headed, and formed in wax, lay underneath it, with the head resting on the block. The Mulatto touched another spring, and the knife fell. The head of the figure rolled into the saw-dust, which was immediately sprinkled with a red fluid like blood, which spurted from the trunk.

“What does all this mean?” asked the Master, in a shuddering whisper.

“Hush ! you will know directly. Look.”

The figure of a winged female, holding in one hand a peculiar cap, had arisen from the box, and seemed to hover over the guillotine.

CHAPTER VIII.

"LAY your hand on the box, citizen," said the Mulatto in a loud voice, "and repeat the oath after me."

The Master placed his right hand on the box as directed.

The Mulatto then proceeded: "I swear, by the guillotine which levels all ranks, that I will be faithful to the cause of liberty, which declares that all men are and should be equal. That, as the only mode of accomplishing that sacred end, is by annihilating and utterly destroying

all tyrants and aristocrats of every race and denomination, I will neither spare age nor sex, I will wade even through seas of blood, until the cause of liberty and equality is triumphant. That, as I have spat upon the lily and crushed it under foot, so will I trample upon the whole accursed race of kings, nobles, and aristocrats; in like manner, as the glorious people have done to the base, dishonoured race of Bourbons, of which this lily is the emblem. That I will cheerfully obey all orders issued by the Chief Commissary of the Convention. That I will be secret, and never betray the fact or purpose of this meeting, or of any other to which I may be summoned, under no less a penalty than death and infamy. All this I swear by the figure of Liberty, and by the guillotine, from whence alone she issues."

Le Blanc translated the oath word for word as the Mulatto gave it, keeping his eye fixed on the Master's wavering countenance.

If the truth must be told, Jack Diver, un-

principled and scoundrel as he was, by no means either understood thoroughly or relished this oath. It was far too un-English and blood-thirsty for his nature; and could he have retracted with safety, he would have readily done so; but it was now too late. His irresolution, however, did not escape the Mulatto's keen eyes; for, turning towards the Master his malevolent countenance, to which a fierce scowl added a truly diabolical expression, he shouted out in a savage tone, "Swear!"

"Swear!" whispered, like a low echo, the musical voice of Le Blanc, in the Master's ear.

"Well, if I must, I must," responded the entrapped Master; "but, curse me, if I like it at all."

He placed his hand, however, on the box, and took the oath as required, with a mental reservation to get out of this scrape by going on board again as soon as he could.

"*C'est bien !*" said the Mulatto, holding out

his hand to the Master; "*tu est, alors mon frère !*"

Every individual in the assembly who could stand, followed his example, repeating the same words, with the sole exception of the Chief, who sat quite motionless and still, seemingly abstracted, and regardless of everything that was going on.

The Mulatto again touched the spring; the figure of Liberty disappeared; and after carefully covering the box with the silk flag, the table was removed, and placed in a corner of the room.

"And now to business," said Le Blanc, waving his hand for the rest to be seated, and addressing the assembly:

"Brother citizens, we are met together here to discuss the means by which this beautiful island is to be rescued from the fangs of the tyrant George and his miscreant red-coats. I, an unworthy citizen of our glorious Republic,

am delegated by the Chief Commissary, Victor Hugues, now commanding the forces of the Republic at Guadaloupe, to concert and arrange with you, our worthy brethren, the best means to be adopted to secure that object. He has placed at my disposal a body of victorious troops, amounting to about three hundred men; and he expects that we shall be joined, on landing, by all good republicans, both by those of French extraction and by our coloured brethren, who must all be anxious and ready to be freed from the yoke of these diabolical aristocrats, as well as by the gallant natives, who no doubt are both willing and prepared to emulate, in deeds of arms, their brethren at St. Vincent's, who have already declared for the Republic; and of this we are assured by the presence of Le Capitaine Baron."

At this direct appeal, the Chief's eyes twinkled with a strange expression, but not a muscle of his countenance moved, and he said nothing.

Le Blanc continued: " Now, citizens, to effect this object, it will be necessary for us to be united, heart and hand; and, above all, that the blow should fall secretly and unexpectedly. The Chief Commissary thinks that it will not be advisable to attack Roseau or Morne Bruce, for they are on their guard there, and our force would be scarcely large enough for a direct attack; it would also afford you no opportunity of joining us. It is, therefore, proposed that we concentrate our force at Marie Galante, and land at Rocroix, or some other convenient spot on the windward side of the island; that we take up a position there, and, when joined by all the well-disposed part of the inhabitants, we shall be able to sweep the few red-coats here into the sea. But, to effect this the more securely, it may be as well to contrive that false information, regarding our contemplated attack, should be conveyed to the weak boy who commands the regular troops. Once make

our landing good, then, bah! the island is our own; and justice, liberty, and equality, for all."

This speech, short and concise as it was for a Frenchman to make, was delivered with great fluency, and with much gesticulation; and it seemed to give great satisfaction to the assembly, particularly as Le Blanc was known to be a trusted emissary from Victor Hugues.

"But it will not be so easy," said Citizen Le Bar, "to convey this false information; and I cannot see, with the force you can raise, why you do not attack Roseau boldly; they have not above a hundred soldiers in all: Morne Bruce once carried, the island is ours."

"I have provided for that," replied Le Blanc, in a half whisper. "What do you suppose I enlisted this *sacré* John Bull for? For love, do you think?"

"No, no," said Le Bar, laughing. "But how, in the devil's name, did you get hold of him? What is he? He looks like a sailor."

“ Why, strangely enough, through Le Capitaine Baron. He is a sailor ; but all’s fish that comes to my net. I never let an opportunity slip ; and when I have a trump card, I play it, and don’t much regard consequences : I never stick at trifles, Citizen Le Bar. But as to attacking Morne Bruce, it is no use running our heads against stone walls, and we should only get hard knocks ; besides, their cursed cruisers might catch us. By landing on the windward side, if we manage it well, there will be nobody to interrupt us, and you will be able to join quietly. What force can you muster, negroes and all ? What says Lemantin ? ”

“ Citizen Le Blanc,” replied the Mulatto, proudly, “ of the coloured people, I can answer for more than fifty ; but, you see, those drunken beasts,” pointing to the negroes, “ they are not to be depended on. However, at the festival of Les Roses and Les Marguerites, I will see what can be done with the drunken hogs.”

“ And of French citizens,” said Le Bar,

"about one hundred and fifty. But there are some of the old families, beasts and traitors that they are, who will not join us—Devrien, for instance."

"They must die, then," said the one called Patun, in a hoarse voice, like the croak of a raven chiming in; "they must die, one and all, root and branch; their houses burnt, and their women —"

"Handed over to our tender mercies," interrupted the Mulatto, with a grin. "I have my eye already on such a charmer —"

A deep, thrilling shudder passed over Le Blanc's iron frame at these words, a gleam of light flashed from his eyes, and he bit his lips till the blood came; but he said not a word in reply to this horrible speech.

"What's the matter, brother?" inquired Marinier, who alone had apparently noticed Le Blanc's confusion.

"Nothing, nothing—I was only thinking how we could communicate with one another

readily. By the bye, have you arms for all? No!—well, that must be provided for. Get your men together, and be in readiness, when called upon. The word will be, '*Vive la République!*' Victor Hugues, it will not be long before you are wanted. I will now go into Roseau, and see how things are going on there. Adieu, my friends, for the present."

So saying, Le Blanc, taking the Master by the arm, walked coolly out of the assembly; the Mulatto opening the door for them, a sinister smile playing over his face as he did so. He had perceived Le Blanc's emotion, and he alone knew the cause. As he held the door open, another man glided by him, merely looking him in the face as he passed—it was the Carib Chief.

When Le Blanc had got into the open air, he seemed to gasp for breath, and muttered, as if speaking to himself: "O, my God! my God! it is rarely that I call upon Thee; but this is terrible! I, who in my vanity thought

that I could foresee everything, never to think of this! A band of bloodthirsty, ruthless savages! O, Rosalie! Rosalie! And my oath. Oh, it is horrible—horrible!”

Beads of sweat stood on his brow, and he writhed in agony.

Jack Diver, whose perception was never of the keenest order, could not, in this instance, fail to notice his companion's extreme distress; but, as the whole discourse had been incomprehensible to him, he could not understand the reason of it. He therefore only stared at his friend, whose whole frame shook with a strong convulsive shiver. At last he broke out:

“What, comrade, ahoy! Has Yellow Jack boarded you? What makes you shake this way?”

Le Blanc recovered himself quickly, and said, in English:

“The heat of that room, and the filthy smell of those beasts, quite overcame me. I could not

stand it any longer, and was obliged to run away. But I'm all right now."

"May I never set foot on deck again, but I thought you were in for it."

"So I am," thought Le Blanc, for a moment. But his mercurial temperament soon got the better of his depression.

"All right now, Captain! I've got horses here, and, now that the sun is getting low, we'll have a pleasant ride into Roseau together; and I'll take you to a house on the road where you will get a good glass of sangaree, which I should think you would like, after what you have gone through. You did not seem to relish it much. Eh, Captain?"

"Oh, Lord! I'm parched already!" replied Jack Diver. "That oath was enough to dry one's liver up for many a long day. After all, I don't like blood!"

"Blood!" muttered Le Blanc, with a shudder. "Worse than blood. Sit down in the shade,

Captain, and I'll bring the horses out in a minute."

The stables, or rather what was left of them—~~for~~ everything was in a dilapidated condition, were situated a few hundred yards from the house in which the assembly had met. When Le Blanc entered them, he found the Carib Chief there before him, with the horses ready saddled. He had changed his feathery head-dress for the slouching straw-hat, and had donned his white frock and trowsers.

"Ha! I am glad you are here, Le Baron," said Le Blanc. "I wanted to speak to you for a moment. Now you have got this man on shore, what do you mean to do with him? I am puzzled, which is not often the case."

"I am going to kill him," replied the Chief, in his own soft, musical language.

"But that will utterly derange my plans. I cannot do without him at present."

"Le Baron will wait until his friend says the

time has come—but he will watch him as the lizard watches the fly upon the wall.”

“ I should not think he would require much watching, Baron. How readily the fool jumped at the bait. But you have never told me your reasons for seeking this man’s life.”

“ Would he not have lashed the Carib Chief like a common negro, had it not been for him ?”

“ Whom do you mean ?” inquired the Frenchman, eagerly.

But the Carib was silent, and Le Blanc knew it was no use questioning him further on that point, though he continued his interrogatories.

“ And who told you that this coarse John Bull, this vulgar, thick-headed fellow, hated the fair-haired youngster at Morne Bruce ? You were right, however, and I thank you for the hint.”

“ Friend,” said the Carib, placing his hand on the Frenchman’s shoulder, “ a Carib chief

has his eyes and ears open, and his mouth shut, and he thinks. You all talk too much."

"Well, it may be so, Baron, but it is our nature—a Frenchman must and will talk. I shall see you again soon, Carib?"

"Yes," briefly responded the Baron.

The Frenchman held out his hand to the Chief, who took it, and then glided out of the stable; but as he passed he whispered in Le Blanc's ear, so low as not to be overheard: "Beware of the Mulatto, Lemantin!"

"Whom does he mean?" asked Le Blanc of himself, as he led the horses out; "and why should I beware of the Mulatto? I wish I had questioned him further; but, peste! it would have been of no use, these Indians are as close as a Parisian head of the police, ay, even as Merlin of Douay himself; but now for this beast of a sailor."

Le Blanc jumped actively on his horse, a good stout, useful beast, brought from the Spanish main, and led the other to Jack Diver, who

climbed, or rather scrambled, into his saddle, after the fashion of those unaccustomed to riding. His hack, however, was a quiet, easy-paced animal, and they jogged on comfortably enough together.

The two did not speak much on the way, for the track was so narrow that they could not ride abreast, and it is doubtful whether either of them noticed the loveliness of the scenery that opened to their view on all sides. Not that the Frenchman could not duly appreciate it, but his mind was pre-occupied. He was horrified at the part he was playing, and already bitterly repented his folly.

We will therefore at once conduct them to the lawn in front of "La Belle Étoile," for so was called the house and estate belonging to Auguste de la Motte Devrien, one of the oldest French settlers on the island.

There was a comfortable, snug look about this house, that spoke of wealth and prosperity, combined with much neatness and good ma-

nagement, qualifications not always met with in the West Indian islands. It was a quadrangular building, low, but covering a great extent of ground. There was no pretension about it, being, as usual, of wood, on a stone basement, hingled outside, roof and all ; the whole painted green, except the roof, which was white.

About half the house only was visible from the front, the back part being screened from the sight by a high thick fence of " Barbadoes Pride," with its striped orange blossoms, flanked on each side by a clump of immense silk, cotton, and mangrove trees.

The front, which faced the sea, was protected by a large and deep verandah, the floor of which was of porous brick, kept constantly damp. Along the trellis-work, of fine iron wire, and fantastic pattern, crept a variety of beautiful climbing plants, brought from the continent of South America, and evidently trained with much care. The whole of this

climbed, or rather scrambled, into his saddle, after the fashion of those unaccustomed to riding. His hack, however, was a quiet, easy-paced animal, and they jogged on comfortably enough together.

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fields of Indian corn, maize, and sweet potatoes, with a few patches of sugar-canes, now only in their first green youth ; and flanking these, on either side, were coffee plantations, rendered not unpicturesque by the coffee plant's protector, or brother, as it is sometimes called, which shields it from the rough blasts that sweep down the mountain gullies.

Behind the house were numerous offices and cattle-sheds, and a small windmill stood near the well. In rear again of these, was a savannah of guinea grass, extending backwards for nearly a mile ; and then rose the mountains, range above range, until the tops were lost in the whirling clouds collected there by the fresh spring trade-wind. Beautiful butterflies, emperors, sphinges, and moths, hovered about the hedge and the orange-trees ; and every now and then a little glancing meteor of green and gold, with a flame-coloured breast, would dart from one to the other with the rapidity of lightning,

hovering for a moment at some chosen flower, with a rustling, humming sound, then away again so swiftly that the eye could scarcely follow it in its rapid flight. Yet in all this lovely scene one thing was wanting. No song-birds thrilled the air with their sweet melody. A lizard or two scuttled off the posts of the verandah—where they had, no doubt, been watching, with their beautiful round eyes, some unsuspecting fly—as the riders approached the house, their horses' hoofs scarce betraying their presence on the soft elastic grass, except to the keen senses of the lizards.

“Hillo—Pompey, Cæsar, anybody at home there?” shouted the Frenchman, jumping off his horse, and fastening him by the bridle to a ring and hook set in a post, evidently for the purpose.

“Here we are, Captain; come in; no ceremony here, they are all old friends of mine.”

Jack Diver dismounted rather more leisurely, feeling a little stiff after his long ride.

Half a dozen negroes had by this time rushed out and seized the horse, all grinning and jabbering together in French.

"Anybody at home, Pierre?" inquired Le Blanc, in English, of a grey-headed old negro who seemed to be the chief amongst them.

"Ees, Massa Frank—Massa in de house and Missees, too," said the voluble Pierre, laying a strong stress on the last word. "Young English buckra officer dere too, but he gone now. He speakee de French as well as you, Massa Frank. Ole Pierre hear his own Massa say him ab French blood in de wain—bery ansome, too."

"'Tis the very man," whispered Jack Diver to his companion. "He is half foreigner, and has got some cursed long French name tacked to his own."

"Never mind now, Captain; come in," replied the Frenchman, though he evidently did not relish this piece of news.

Le Blanc pushed open the door, which was

not fastened, without further ceremony (knockers and bells not being in use in that country), and walked into the house.

It appeared very dark, coming as they did out of the glaring day, but the rustling of a female dress, evidently quitting the room hurriedly, was distinctly audible. When Jack Diver could look round him he found himself in a large well-proportioned apartment, with very little furniture in it: the floor, however, was of highly-polished mahogany, and the walls were panelled with the same. A few old-fashioned though richly-carved chairs, a rose-wood table, and a buffet of the same material with brass feet, comprised the whole of the furniture; but on the buffet were ranged several beautifully-cut glass jugs, filled with dark and amber-coloured fluids, and behind them appeared richly-chased goblets of gold and silver, upon antique shields of the same metals, which served as trays.

Close to the jalousies was slung a fine grass hammock, in which lay an old man wrapped in a handsome silk dressing-gown, with a cap of the same material on his head. His face was thin and of a yellowish tinge, but his features were good and regular. An arm-chair stood close by on which was laid an open book, and some delicate female work was hanging over one of the arms. The careless way in which it was thrown there, showed that the occupant of this chair had been suddenly scared away.

The old man awoke as they entered, and cried out peevishly :

“Rosalie, Rosalie, why do you awake me?” but perceiving the new comers, he rolled himself out of his hammock very actively for an old man—kissed Le Blanc between the eyes, and shook hands with Jack Diver, as he said :

“Aha, mon cher François, c’est bien toi mon fils, I am so glad to see you and your

friend too. What will you take? Rosalie, Rosalie."

The old man called for Rosalie, but we cannot think of introducing her at the end of a chapter.

CHAPTER IX.

PERHAPS Rosalie Devrien, had she lived in a more temperate climate, would have been even more beautiful than she was in the intensely hot and enervating atmosphere of Dominica (certainly one of the warmest of the Caribbean Islands, particularly on the west side, where scarcely a breath of air stirs the leaves, except in the draught of the trade winds which run down from the mountain tops, where they steal some of the richness of her beauty and have left instead a soft languor on her

nance and in her movements which was perfectly irresistible. Her hair was black as—
what shall I say?—for a simile must be found—like a tropical thunder-cloud, while still the red sun shines brightly, was the colour of Rosalie's luxuriant locks. Her long back hair, which, when loose, almost swept the ground, was ingeniously plaited, and interwoven with strings of small seed pearls, and rolled up on the crown of her head. It was kept in its place by a high golden comb, every tooth of which was headed by some costly jewel: over this was loosely thrown a small mantilla of white lace. Her front hair was quite plain, except that two little flat-pointed curls rested on her snowy forehead, and behind each ear hung a corresponding tiny ringlet. Her complexion was pale, too pale, perhaps, for our notion of female loveliness; the intense heat of the tropics had withdrawn from her cheeks the blushing beauty of the rose, but left there the simple purity of the lily. You could not

tell exactly the colour of her large melting eyes —sometimes black, sometimes deep violet-blue, as the light varied. Was it the shadow of the long, fringed eyelashes, or the influence of the enervating climate, that gave to those eyes that soft, voluptuous expression? — her heart was all purity, still they were voluptuous. Her face was small, perfectly oval, and every feature as regular as if sculptured by Grecian art.

If you could find any fault in this lovely countenance, it might be in the want of colour in her cheeks and lips, or perhaps you might say that her arched eyebrows were too strongly marked ; still this very fault might be said, from its contrast, to heighten the pure beauty of her alabaster skin.

Her figure corresponded with her face. She was in stature perhaps a little below that which we consider perfect in a woman ; but her limbs were exquisitely and delicately proportioned, and her bust perfection : indeed, if the truth must be confessed, you could not be long in

her presence without perceiving it; for her dress was scanty, and she wore none of those hateful encumbrances called stays. Her arms were bare, except that round them were twisted bracelets and armlets of alternate gold and coral-beads. Her dress was of black silk, made in the Spanish fashion, fitting tight to the body, without any ornaments whatever: it was cut low at the bosom, and short in the skirts; but as her feet and ankles, the first clothed in velvet, the second in the finest silk, were unexceptionable, I have no doubt that the young Frenchman thought this a considerable improvement on the dresses he had been most accustomed to; and indeed she had a right to this dress, for her mother was of noble Spanish extraction. A more highly bred and graceful creature than this lovely girl never entered a room.

Rosalie was not one of those indolent, half-educated, though lovely creoles, who make such pretty playthings for the hour, but whose

utter want of intellectual acquirements so soon dispels the illusion of their charms. She had been educated in a convent, amongst other children of noble birth, until the dispersion of its inmates by the decree of a despotic Republic. She was then removed to London, where she learnt not only those accomplishments for which Englishwomen are celebrated, but also imbibed a taste for literature. There also she received several offers from men well worthy of her, which she declined, nobody knew why.

During the fierce war that raged between kingly England and republican France at this period, her father sustained some severe losses from the capture, by the republican privateers, of the ships in which his produce was embarked, and he was reluctantly obliged to recal Rosalie from England; reluctantly, because, having no thought but for her happiness, he feared that the climate and want of society in the little Island of Dominica, would affect her health and spirits. In this, however, he was mistaken—

Rosalie retained both. She quitted London without regret, for she loved her father dearly; and there was another reason, which my readers may guess, why she had no objection to the West Indies. She arrived safely at Dominica, and was immediately installed mistress of *La Belle Étoile*. Her father, though naturally active, and a good man of business, had been rendered indolent by the climate; and he was delighted to find, in his handsome and accomplished daughter, an able assistant and a capital manager. It was owing to Rosalie that the neatness, and even elegance, of everything about the house and estate surpassed all the others in the island.

The slaves, moreover, almost adored her; they regarded her as a superior being. Many of them would try to kiss the hem of her garment, as they blessed the hour in which she had come among them. Old Pierre absolutely worshipped her.

When she entered the room, the old man

bade her languidly to do the honours of the house, and retired again to his hammock, saying :

“ I have pressed your cousin and his friend to stay to-night, but they seem unwilling ; try what you can do, Rosalie.”

The two cousins embraced affectionately ; and Rosalie, with a graceful but somewhat haughty inclination, returned Jack Diver’s awkward salutation. The Master, as he himself would have said, was rather taken aback at the appearance of this lovely creature ; and the half bashful, half impudent, manner of his address, caused a smile to wreath itself round Rosalie’s lips. After some conventional conversation, Rosalie said to her cousin :

“ François, it is a long time since you visited La Belle Étoile, would you like to see the improvements I have made ? And perhaps your friend might wish to walk round the estate ?”

Le Blanc thanked her with an expressive look, but Jack Diver declined, saying that he was

tired, and would like to rest himself: in fact, he was so stiff that he could hardly walk. A hammock was soon slung for him, to which he retired, with a cigar and a glass of sangaree, and the cousins went out together. What they said at first, as they looked into each other's eyes, beneath the shade of the old cotton trees, was no doubt thrillingly interesting to themselves, but it would not be to our readers. After some time, Rosalie said:

"And what mad freak, may I ask, are you now upon, my volatile cousin, that you have assumed this disguise? Why I declare you have quite a piratical look. Stay—what is this, blue, white, and red? François, my dear cousin, surely you have not turned Republican?"

"Why not, sweet Rosalie?"

"O, François! had my father seen this. Thank Heaven, the room was dark. The very mention of the tricolor puts him in a fury; what would it be then if he saw you wear it?"

"But, Rosalie, I have indeed adopted it,"

said François, earnestly; "the *drapeau blanc* and the lily are no longer the colours under which the man of France can raise his head. The lily is faded, and the *drapeau blanc* was soiled; it was necessary to find new emblems for La belle France."

Rosalie Devrien gazed on her lover fixedly, and she soon perceived that, although the latter part of his speech was spoken in a laughing manner, he was really in earnest. She had loved her cousin long and deeply, and she was greatly shocked to learn from his own lips the truth of the rumours she had already heard concerning the line of politics adopted by him. Rosalie was moreover, rather surprised at the readiness with which he confessed his adhesion to the cause of liberty. Proud and coquetish as she was by nature, to him she had ever been soft, gentle, and affectionate. Her father, a staunch adherent of the unfortunate Bourbons, had imbued her mind with a vague hatred towards everything connected with the Re-

public. This, then, was the first time that her love had been brought in contact with her hate. A struggle was obvious : love at first prevailed ; and she said, in a soft tone of voice, gently pressing her lover's hand :

"Discard this dress, and come and live with us, dear François."

"I cannot, Rosalie : I have taken a fearful oath," said Le Blanc, sadly.

"I understand you," replied the maiden, drawing herself up proudly, "you have two mistresses—your boasted Liberty and your cousin Rosalie : choose between them. I brook no rival."

"Nay, but, my sweet cousin, I am bound by honour."

"Honour !" exclaimed Rosalie, contemptuously ; "honour amongst regicides—amongst ruffians ! whose delight is in shedding innocent blood — who overthrow without re-building ! Honour, François ! That word belongs not to such as they."

"But, Rosalie, hear me. You, who love the truth, would not, surely, have me break a solemn oath?"

"And does not our holy religion say that such oaths are not binding? My confessor shall absolve you from it, and we can again be friends."

"Friends, Rosalie! Already so cold a word!"

"Have we not always been friends?" said the maiden, blushing deeply. "Can I say more?"

"Yes; I would have you say that you still love me, Rosalie. Do I not love thee passionately—devotedly?"

"No!" exclaimed the maiden, proudly, her soft eyes suddenly lighting with a bright and even fierce flash. "No! once you said that you did, and I believed you—weak fool that I was—but you have forgotten that the blood of the haughty Spaniard still runs in my veins. I will have no rival—I can bear no divided affection. The man whom I would

love must be mine, and mine only—choose your path—it lies before you.”

“What would you have me do, dear Rosalie?”

“O, François!” replied the maiden, tenderly bending her dark, voluptuous eyes on his; “come and live with us—renounce the men of blood you have associated with, and I will love you so fondly and so devotedly, that you will soon forget the dangerous ties you have formed. Come to us—my father loves you, and will make you his heir; and you and I, in happy union, will cherish his declining years, and, in this peaceful spot, live cheerfully and die contentedly. Come, François!”

“O, Rosalie! why do you tempt me so?—it is cruel! You do not know—you cannot feel what it is to shake off the trammels of slavery; to rise from degradation; from being king and priest-ridden, to become free—gloriously free!”

“Yes; the freedom of savages, who delight in blood!” said the maiden, contemptuously.

“Say not so, Rosalie. The blood that has

been shed has been but for an oblation to reason and liberty. Alas ! why do I say this ? —you will not understand me !”

“ It is true. You have set up your images, and you worship them, and immolate thousands of innocent victims on their altars.”

“ Nay, but, Rosalie, is not liberty alone worthy of all our homage ?”

“ Alas, François ! what you say convinces me more and more that there is a great gulf fixed between us ; for I am assured that you who follow, as you say, the cause of liberty, forsake our holy religion. Oh ! for the sake of her who once taught you those sacred truths, deny this, François. Dear François, say, at least, you are not one of these.”

The young Republican dropped the hand that until now he had held in his, and, with his eyes cast down on the ground, while a tear trickled from them, he said, in a low, mournful tone :

“ I cannot, Rosalie.”

“ Then neither God nor man would sanction

such an unholy union !” exclaimed the maiden, solemnly.

It was a strange sight to see the bold, daring, reckless young adventurer subdued, bowed down, in tears, dejected, humbled by the words of the beautiful girl. Bitterly did he lament the eager haste with which he had entered into the schemes of his superior, Victor Hugues ; bitterly did he regret the enterprise he had undertaken, for his heart was no longer in it: it was with Rosalie. Conflicting ideas passed rapidly in strange confusion through his bewildered mind ; his fearful oath ; the Mulatto’s threat ; the Carib’s warning ; Rosalie’s last words—all rang strangely together in his ears. “ Neither God nor man would sanction their union”—such were the words, spoken solemnly. It seemed as if a decree had gone forth. He knew that Rosalie would not lightly alter her determination, and he loved her. Nor were the maiden’s ideas less confused. What she had said were not words spoken without

thought on the spur of the moment. True, this meeting had come upon her suddenly and unexpectedly; but she had long wished for it, she prayed for it, although she dreaded it. She knew that her cousin had lately enlisted himself under the blood-stained flag of the Republic, yet she hoped that her influence, her presence might recal him from what she felt to be not only a dangerous but unholy path.

Her pride, and her love for her religion, had carried her through the conversation, but his dejection—his tears—distressed her. Had she a right to reproach him as she had done? And then he had borne her reproaches so humbly, so meekly, so different from what she had expected. It proved that his love for her was sincere and deep, and she, too, loved him. But, alas! no human being is perfect; with all this good, this religious feeling, Rosalie was a coquette. Even after the sentence she had passed, and even if her cousin had been indifferent to her, she would not have suffered him

to loose himself entirely from her chains.
Who can read a pretty woman's heart?

And there, beneath the shade of the grim old cotton trees, they stood, silently, neither daring to look up—scarcely to breathe, for over both their hearts stole the dim foreshadowings of the future.

The maiden was the first to recover herself, and, holding out her jewelled hand to François, she said :

“Though we cannot be more, let us be friends.”

François remained with his eyes still bent on the ground.

“Listen to me, at least,” continued the maiden, pettishly. “I expect Margaret Gordon here every minute. Had I known that you were coming, I would not have asked her.”

“What is Margaret Gordon to me?” murmured the miserable François.

“Do you not remember her father's unhappy

fate? Beware how you mention the Republic before her. I tell you this to warn you."

"I shall not see her."

"Yes, yes, you will, dear François. I do not see you often, and I cannot let you go so easily," said Rosalie, softly laying her hand on her lover's shoulder. "Besides," continued she, with an arch smile, "I want you to help to — entertain the young officer who commands the British troops; he is to dine with us to-day."

"Peste!" muttered Le Blanc, his attention now becoming keenly aroused; "that will never do. How came you to know him, Rosalie?"

"He brought letters of introduction to my father from some old friends of his, who, alas! are now in exile; and he is, as I heard my father say, in some degree connected with our family through his mother; in fact, François, he is another cousin."

"Our meeting would be an unpleasant one. I cannot stay, Rosalie."

"Why not ? you are my cousin ; that surely would be enough to allay any suspicion, if he entertained any, even if he did not know my father's politics."

"But there is also some quarrel between him and the Englishman ; they might enter into some unpleasant dispute."

"Where is your chivalry gone, my cousin ? Captain Conway is too much of a gentleman to quarrel before ladies."

"You have seen this Englishman, then ?"

"Yes, he was here to-day. He is very handsome and agreeable, and speaks our language with a true Parisian accent."

A flush passed over the young Frenchman's face, as he thought of the reason he had given to Jack Diver for his assumed hatred to Conway. Out of favour as he was with his mistress, here was a formidable rival already in the field, and this rival, the very man of all others the most dangerous to him. Jealousy struck him with

her scorpion sting. He began to fear that his words might be realized—that he might, indeed, be robbed of his mistress by the fair-haired aristocrat. The thought at this juncture was enough to madden him: jealousy is never reasonable.

“I intend that he shall fall in love with Margaret,” continued Rosalie, playfully, little imagining what was passing in her lover’s mind; “and that will be a pretty little romance to get up in this stupid little island.”

“Take care, Rosalie: you are playing with edged tools; these things are sharp, and it is better not to meddle with them.”

“What do you mean, cousin? explain, if you please, your mystery?”

“You know well enough,” replied the Frenchman, pettishly, “that I am no cousin; why do you keep up that farce?”

“Because it is my will and pleasure that you should still be considered so. Why, what is the

matter with you, François? your eye flashes fire, and you rasp your teeth together; what heroic vein are you in now?"

"Rosalie, you will drive me mad," cried her lover; "why did you ask this cursed Englishman here at all?"

"Why did you become a Republican? was it for love of Rosalie? Question for question," replied the maiden, laughing, for she perceived his unreasonable jealousy. "By the bye, now I think of it," continued she, determined to tease him, "there is a great likeness between you two, although the colour of your eyes and hair are not the same."

"Peste!" exclaimed Le Blanc, bitterly: "do you want to throw me off, Rosalie? Has the glove been worn long enough, that you want a fresh pair? Fools that men are, to be put on and off by a pretty woman's capricious will!"

"Ha! ha! there speaks the tyrant man. He would be absolute master; the woman must

have no will. But, dear, dear François," continued Rosalie, tenderly twining her arms round his figure, and suffering him to imprint a burning kiss on her pouting lips, "you must not leave me—say that you will not."

The young Frenchman, when their lips met, forgot, in that moment of ecstatic bliss, his purpose and his jealousy. When they awoke from the delicious transport, a slight figure, dressed in a hat and riding-habit, was standing by, gazing affectionately on them.

Margaret, or Maggie Gordon, as she was generally called, although essentially Scotch by name, and in her heart fondly attached to everything connected with the

"Land of the mountain and the flood,"

and more especially to the memory of the unfortunate race of the kingly Stuarts, did not show, either in her figure, face, or speech, that she was derived from northern blood. Her figure, displayed to perfection by her tight-fitting riding-

habit, was on a small scale, but exquisitely moulded and proportioned. Nothing could be more graceful than the fall of her shoulders, her swelling bust, and tiny waist. Her face was oval; her features small, delicate, and regular; her eyes were blue as the tropical sky; and her hair, which clustered in a profusion of ringlets, on each side of her snowy forehead, was of a bright rich golden colour. Her movements were all graceful and elegant, though simple and unaffected. She was nature's own child—nature's, in her sunniest, warmest, gayest mood. There was freshness, youth, and innocence in all she said, in all she did; and this made her bold, and fearless of danger. There was intelligence in her smile, in the sparkle of her azure eyes, in every gesture, in every movement. Guileless as a dove, she was, in truth, as wise as a serpent. Joyous and light-hearted as she now was, Maggie's youthful history was sad and eventful.

Her grandfather, a cadet of one of the noblest

houses in Scotland, had espoused, at an early age, the cause of the unfortunate James the Second. After the fatal battle of Aughrim, he had succeeded in escaping into France. Finding the cause of the Stuarts hopeless, Mr. Gordon, wiser than the generality of the followers of that unlucky race, having still some remains of his fortune left, devoted himself to mercantile pursuits in that then, as now, famous sea-port, Marseilles, and married, at rather an advanced age, a Frenchwoman of noble birth. By her he had one son, who, following his father's footsteps, acquired a considerable property, and in an evil hour, removed to Paris, but not before he had taken to himself a wife, the daughter of a wealthy merchant at Marseilles.

For many years they were childless, but, at length, the fairy-like little Margaret was born, and great were the rejoicings thereat. Early in that terrible revolution, that shook Europe to its centre, Mr. Gordon contrived to offend one of the principal leaders of the Convention, by

refusing him a loan of money, for which he was denounced as an aristocrat and thrown into prison, from whence he only emerged to place his head under the knife of the ready guillotine. His wife and Margaret, then about thirteen years old, escaped, after many perils, into Scotland, with but little means of subsistence, and sought an asylum amidst Mr. Gordon's relatives. This, at first, was cheerfully accorded to them, but Scotland had become bitterly Presbyterian, and their Papistical ways soon made them many enemies. Poor Mrs. Gordon, whose nerves had never recovered the dreadful shock of her husband's miserable death, could not long bear up against the world. She soon sank under the accumulated trials of poverty, dependence, religious persecution, ill-health, and an ungenial climate, and poor Maggie was left an orphan. Her youth, her beauty, vivacity and gentle disposition were of but little avail to her for the four years she remained in the canny North. Placed under the charge of an

old maiden lady, a rigid, bitter Presbyterian, her quick, youthful feelings were constantly hurt by some biting allusion to her Papistical education, and to her attachment to the exiled race of kings. Now Margaret, even as a child, though simple, was proud—proud of the memory of her parents, sacrificed as victims on the altar of liberty; proud of her religion; proud in the consciousness of intellect—and her little heart beat strangely at these insults. Her bright eyes flashed with suppressed indignation when the memory of all she held dear was spoken of disrespectfully; and in the solitude of her little room, she often shed bitter tears, lamenting her lonely and isolated position. Many attempts were made by the ministers of the kirk to convert her, though she repelled all their efforts with scorn and indignation. But the more she repelled them, the more she was persecuted, and poor little Maggie led an unpleasant life. Still her education was not neglected; and unhappy as she was, she grew in beauty, grace and

accomplishments until she had completed her seventeenth year; when an incident happened which changed the whole current of her fate.

Margaret had a vision—at least, she always maintained that her mother really appeared by her bedside on that night, and commanded her to go up at daybreak to the ruins of an old abbey, that stood in picturesque, though decayed, grandeur on a knoll near the cottage in which she lived. Her manner of relating it on that evening was this:

“On the last night of my seventeenth year, I was lying in bed, thinking upon what the next year would produce, and endeavouring to recall to my mind the fearful scenes I had witnessed, and the troubles I had undergone, and I wept. Suddenly, a pleasant dreamy calm seemed to steal over my troubled senses, and I heard a soft voice whisper: ‘Dost thou sleep, my child?’ I could not answer, but, at the foot of my bed, I saw my mother, standing in the same dress she wore on that fearful day, when we fled from

Paris, the same in everything but that her head was bare, and her long golden hair fell loosely over her shoulders. She looked at me with a sweet and tender expression, not mournful, but resigned. A ray of moonlight, that stole through the half-closed shutters, shone upon something that she held in her hand. It was a small silver crucifix, which I recognised as one that she had long lost. She raised it slowly to her lips and kissed it; then, extending it towards the window, as if pointing to the hills, she said, in a low voice: 'Daughter, go at day-break to the ruined abbey.' I would have risen, but I looked, and the ray of moonlight darted farther on. She was gone. Until the grey light of dawn crept along the valleys, I lay awake, thinking on the mysterious injunction, nor for one moment did I hesitate to obey it. Before the sun had dispersed the mists on the heath-clad hills, I arose, and dressing myself as noiselessly as I could, I stole from the cottage unperceived. The morning was calm and

beautiful, and the sky was blue overhead; but along the clear trout stream, that murmured in its rocky bed through the valley below, rolled masses of white vapour, which occasionally spread themselves over the hill-sides, assuming, to my disordered fancy, strange and fantastic forms, as I ran rather than walked over the little bridge that spanned the stream. The startled grouse arose, scared by my approach, and the frightened sheep wheeled round, and gazed at me as I ascended the hill to the ruined abbey; but I felt no fear, lonely as the scene appeared. An owl glided away on noiseless wing, and a troop of jackdaws flew screaming away as I entered the ruins. No one had yet been there. I seated myself on a fallen stone, and waited patiently and motionless for the sun to rise above the hills.

“Near the abbey, there was a small cemetery of consecrated ground, where a few shattered tombstones still stood, and here and there a mound of earth, some evidently of recent con-

struction, showed that it was still used as a burial-place by the unsophisticated inhabitants of the neighbourhood.

“ Suddenly, as if emerging from a grave, the figure of a man, well stricken in years, appeared before me. He stooped down and examined the tombstones one by one, and, at that moment, a ray of sun illuminated a distant hill, and, stealing along the valley, fell on a small silver crucifix which the man held to his lips. I felt no fear—I did not hesitate—for the crucifix was the same. I started out from the ruins, and stood before him. My sudden apparition startled the man, who sprang back, exclaiming :

“ ‘ O, God, it is herself !’

“ Then, perceiving that I was real flesh and blood, and no ghost (for which he no doubt took me at first), he bade me good morning.

“ ‘ Perhaps,’ said I, ‘ I can assist your search, for I am well skilled in the traditions and histories of those that lie here.’

“ ‘Thanks, my pretty maiden ; it is, perhaps, hopeless. I seek the grave of Marguerite Gordon. I have been looking for it for months, but I have not found it,’ said the man, with a voice that filled me with strange delight.

“ ‘It is not here,’ replied I, mournfully.

“ ‘Strange!’ said the man, doubtingly. ‘I was told last night that I should here find what I sought—there is everything the same ; but you—’

“ ‘Who told you?’ I cried, so earnestly, that the stranger started back in amazement.

“ ‘That voice!’ murmured he. ‘Maiden, it was herself, Marguerite Gordon.’

“ ‘And I am Margaret Gordon!’ ”

The rest is soon told : it was her mother’s once-loved, though nearly forgotten, brother who now held her to his breast. He had early emigrated to the West Indies, to seek his fortune, where, in course of time, the wild, improvident, young Frenchman, had settled into the calm money-making merchant, or, more strictly

speaking, planter. He had prospered in that ungenial climate; and though apparently forgetting and forgot, he had at heart never lost his loyalty to his king, nor his love for his sister Marguerite. The cross which had been hers, had been mysteriously conveyed to him by some unknown hand, some time after her death, and it had awakened within him a strong yearning to learn what had become of her. He travelled on over the country, inquiring everywhere for Margaret Gordon, for a long time unsuccessfully; but one evening, when weary and tired out, he was offered the hospitality of a bed, by a small farmer, near the village where Margaret used sometimes to make small purchases. In the house, an old crone looked fixedly at him, and said:

“Ye sould be a Gordon, by your e’e. There’s a bonny lassie waits for ye in the kirk-yard, on the gray muir, since the gloaming. Away now until her. Maggie Gordon she is hight.”

He thought the old woman was mad; but on

inquiry, he found that a Margaret Gordon was said to be living near an old abbey, on the moor. True, he read the old woman's words as if she had meant that the body was buried in the abbey, and he went to find her tomb.

CHAPTER X.

THE dinner-party at La Belle Etoile passed off pleasantly enough. Arthur Conway shook hands kindly with Jack Diver, who, mollified by the sangaree, and conscious of his awkward position, dared not reject the proffered reconciliation. As if out of pique, Le Blanc attached himself to the winning Marguerite, and the dark-eyed creole paid particular attention to the fair-haired young officer. The old planter did the honours courteously, and everything went on smoothly and pleasantly. The dinner was excellent.

There was parrot-soup, turtle from the Bahamas, mountain mullet, and crayfish from the gurgling stream, small black crabs from the mountains, ground doves, ramier, pepper-pot, curried iguanas, and many other strange delicacies. By each plate was a fresh-gathered lime, and the fragrant leaves of that most delicate tree were floating in the finger-glasses. The room was filled with the perfume of fruits and flowers. The dessert was splendid : racy mangoes, guavas, sweet limes, shaddocks, pine-apples, forbidden fruit, pommes d'or, grapes, figs, arbutus berries, and many other delicacies were piled on dishes of beautiful Sèvres china. The wine was deliciously cool ; for, although ice was not imported into the islands in those days, old Pompey knew well how to manage that ; and the punch, Jack Diver pronounced inimitable.

The evening passed rapidly away ; Le Blanc, who had thrown off his masquerade and now appeared dressed all in white, was extremely

fascinating and agreeable. He played on the guitar, sang old French songs, never even alluded to politics, flirted, apparently in great spirits, with Margaret Gordon, and left his Rosalie exposed to the tender glances of our hero. He, flattered by the attention paid to him, and charmed to find two such well-educated and fascinating girls in such a paltry island, seemed determined to enjoy himself. He could not help riveting his gaze on the enchanting creole whose dark voluptuous eyes meeting his, were immediately lowered as if in maidenly confusion. For shame, Rosalie! They talked poetry together, they sang duets, and although the conversation, at times, became general, there appeared an evident tendency to pairing off. Jack Diver and the old planter smoked their cigars comfortably in the verandah, leaving the younger ones to flirt, or sing, or talk, as they pleased.

Treacherous as the air they breathed, treacherous as the painted scenery they gazed upon,

treacherous as the ground beneath their feet, was everything that passed on that fatal evening. But we must not anticipate. The moon has risen above the horizon, shedding her broad pale light along the tranquil sea.

Arthur Conway rises to depart. Rosalie presses him to stay with a winning smile and a soft, speaking glance. He resists the temptation, because he dares not leave his little command, for strange rumours are abroad. A riding party, however, for the next day, to visit the falls of the Roseau River, is arranged, and Arthur Conway and the Master of the transport take leave, the horses having been brought round by the slaves. Le Blanc lingered behind, to say something to Rosalie; what it was, the moon alone can witness, for that uncertain lady was the only one who was present at their parting. As the two riders emerged from the shadow of the trees, there might have been seen a dusky figure, with a gliding, noiseless step, following them at a short distance.

"I hope all animosities are forgotten, Captain Diver," said Arthur, as he reined in his horse to let that worthy come alongside; "and that you and your friend will dine with me at our little mess at Morne Bruce tomorrow, after the riding party."

Jack Diver was startled, and, as he would have said, completely taken aback. Dark thoughts, devil prompted, had been involuntarily suggesting themselves to his heated imagination. The loneliness of the track, for road it could not be called, the deep shadow of the tamarind trees, the fantastic forms assumed by the creeping plants, the sickly light of the moon, and, above all, the opportunity, conjured up in his mind the idea of murder. He had pistols about him, and his enemy was unarmed; why should he not be revenged? The perspiration was running off his brow in streams, for the evil spirit was stirring within him, and yet he had no fixed idea. Once or twice he had felt for his pistols, and once he had drawn one

out, but he had replaced it hurriedly with a shudder—the deed was too cold-blooded and cowardly even for him.

Little did Arthur Conway dream of the risk he was running, and as little did the ruffian, who was meditating his death, imagine that a pair of dark, clear eyes were watching every motion of his with a fierce significance.

“Yes—no—I’ll be cursed if I do—that is—” stammered out the Master—“what ! dine with you ?”

“Why not ?” replied Arthur, laughing ; “surely you have forgiven me for interfering about that black rascal.”

“It is not that—but what the devil shall I say to him ? I shall get into a precious mess if I don’t take care,” thought Jack Diver. “I must go on board to-morrow, and look after the loading.”

“You forget that you are engaged to the ladies for the riding party ; and after that, you and your friend can dine with me. Do not

think that it is for a trifle that I am so pressing, I want your advice and assistance, Captain Diver. You can be of great service to me. How many men have you on board the 'Sally?' You are strong-handed, I know, and we shall want every man we can muster."

"What do you want my men for?"

"There's no use asking if they will fight; being British, of course they will. Do you not know, Captain, that there are strong rumours of the French attacking this island? How many men can you spare me, on a pinch? Of course, if it comes to fighting, you will give me a helping hand yourself."

The sound of a horse, coming rapidly behind them, saved Jack Diver from answering. He was, as may be supposed, dreadfully confused by this appeal for assistance; the oath he had taken suggesting itself immediately in a very unpleasant manner. "You need not say anything of this to your friend," continued Arthur, "as I wish to get together as strong a force as

I possibly can without spreading an alarm. There are so many disaffected in this island, that if our preparations reach their ears, we shall be beset with spies, and our arrangements made known to that cunning dog, Victor Hugues. Indeed, I fear we have spies amongst us already ; there has been some tampering with the soldiers, but, by Heaven ! if I catch any of them, I will hang them up to the next tree, without the benefit or mockery of a trial. Not a word to your friend, Captain Diver—here he comes !”

Gall and wormwood were not more bitter than the young officer’s words to the Master of the transport.

Le Blanc cantered up, gaily humming the “Marseillaise.” As he approached them, his horse shied across the track, and nearly unseated him ; but the moonlight was playing such fantastic tricks with the broken rocks, the quaint shrubs, and the uncouth cactus plants which twined and twisted and threw their strange arms

into the air against the broad moonlight, that the Frenchman took no more notice of it than by touching the horse with bit and spur. As he rode up, Arthur Conway invited him to join their party at the mess on the ensuing evening, to which Le Blanc readily agreed, to the surprise and dismay of the Master of the transport. When they had forded the Roseau River, which danced and sparkled in the pale moonshine, the party separated, Arthur skirting the town, and cantering along the smooth turf to the foot of the Morne, and the others clattering over the ill-paved, steaming, noisome streets of the town of Roseau.

As Arthur Conway is our hero, we will follow him to his quarters.

Morne Bruce, already so often mentioned, is a spur running out from the mountains towards the sea, on the leeward side of the island, and very nearly equidistant from the north and south extremities. On one side is the valley of the Roseau River, to which the descent is very

abrupt, although the sides of the precipice are clothed with an infinite variety of beautiful shrubs. On the other side, is a deep and rugged ravine, covered with brushwood, and castor-oil plants. The approach to the plateau from the town is by a zig-zag road, cut in the face of the hill. The highest level is about six hundred feet above the sea. Two or three small batteries command the approaches, but it is not regularly fortified. At the lower end of the slope, amidst scattered mangoe and lime-trees, stand a few detached buildings, which are officers' mess-house and quarters. Above them, near the narrow neck of land which attaches the Morne to the mountain-chain, are the mens' barracks, standing on a tolerably level piece of ground. Immediately around is a perfect wilderness of shrubs, but the views are beautiful, and the scenery rich and varied. A few sentries were stationed at intervals on the Morne, their bayonets glancing in the moonlight.

Arthur Conway, giving his horse to a ser-

vant, threw himself on a bench in the verandah of his quarters, and gazed on the loveliness of the night.

Night in the tropics is very different from night in green old England. There, the silence may be occasionally broken by the bark of a dog, the screech of an owl, or the honeysuckle flapping against the casement; but, in the tropics, as soon as the sun has sunk beneath the glowing horizon, the air is alive with sounds from the deep boom of the huge crapaud, to the shrill twee-twee of the large purple lizard. The night-wind always seems to sigh mournfully. Insects go humming and droning about, the knocker knocks, the teasing cricket chirps shrilly, mosquitoes—bores in miniature—burr in your ear; there is no rest—no peace. The insect world is in a state of frantic revelry, and, to accompany them, you get into a fury, and perhaps a fever.

And what were Arthur Conway's thoughts as he sat in the verandah, gazing on the moonlit

sea? Were they wandering back amidst the fine old oaks of Morley, with the gay, the laughing Edith by his side? Was he brooding over his changed fortunes? Was he devising how, with his small force, he should meet an attack from the French?

Oh, no! his thoughts were full of the fair-haired Margaret. True, he had talked and flirted with the violet-eyed maiden—how could he help it? She attached herself to him, and the blushing, blue-eyed fairy had rather avoided, than sought his society. Yet, strange to say, he remembered all she did—all she said; every tone was recalled to his imagination. Her tiny figure, her sweet blue eyes, and silky, golden hair, were all there, distinct and visible. Her strange history—for she had told it on that evening—had interested him deeply. He sympathized with her, and now he felt that, had he not loved Edith, Margaret Gordon would have kindled in his breast the spark of love.

And Edith had spurned and rejected him,

because he was no longer the owner of Morley—so he thought. His heart was still full of burning indignation. The wound was rankling—festering—in truth, destroying him, secretly—subtly. Were all women coquettes, jilts, pretty things without hearts? Edith was one—Rosalie Devrien was one. Was Margaret Gordon also? He would see. Dangerous resolution! There could be no risk in making the experiment. If she were but a coquette, no mischief was done; and if he found her heart true and loving, he was independent, and he would marry her, and forget in her arms his love for Edith.

Poor Arthur! He was very young, and he knew not yet the power of first love. He was not one of those who feared the ridicule of his brother officers. They might laugh away—what cared he for them? Then, although Margaret Gordon lived in such a paltry island, she had been well educated, and was of good, if not of noble, extraction. And then came the

horrible, the soul-harrowing thought, that he—
he—Arthur Conway—was what? a dishonoured,
a degraded being, an outcast from society, a
bastard! Had he not acted in a cowardly
manner, suffering his mother's good name to be
tarnished so easily? Had he fought manfully?
No; he had run away almost without a struggle,
simply because he had been jilted by a coquette.

The rattle of a firelock sounded through the
stilly night as a sentry challenged:

"Who goes there?"

There was no answer. Again all was still.
Presently, Arthur heard a slight rustling amidst
the bushes in his little garden, and a dusky
figure, nearly naked, stood in the shadow of a
huge banana, and beckoned to him with his
hand. Arthur Conway started at this strange
apparition, and was about to call out; but the
figure made a gesture of silence, throwing his
hands up, to show that he was unarmed; he
then advanced slowly towards the verandah, with
a noiseless step.

Arthur suffered him to approach, as there was evidently nothing hostile in his movements.

The man pointed to the door of Arthur's quarters. Our hero mechanically arose, went in, and the dusky figure followed him, looking restlessly round to see that there was no one else there.

"We are alone," said the young officer. "You may say what you want, without any fear of our being overheard ; but wait till I light a candle."

"Me got Alguna cosa hablar, Englees Capitan," replied the man, in a low, soft, musical voice, but in a strange compound of languages. "No want lumbre moon dat bastante."

This preliminary address was enough to puzzle our hero, who now looked with unfeigned curiosity at the man's swarthy countenance, on which a straggling ray of the moon darted through the half-closed jalousies.

"You not sabe me ?—dat serange !"

"I think I do ; and yet —"

"Great big batteau—el Capitan go for flogge
—Official Inglis say no—big poisson, vat you
call shark fees come manger—India man swim
—dive. Go on de tierra. Him sauvé—now
you sabe ?"

"Yes, I know you now. You are the man
the Master of the 'Sally' was going to flog?"

"Si, Señor, dat true." Here the man drew
himself up proudly. "Me Capitan Baron—
what you call Chef des Caraibes."

We have taken the liberty to give so much
of the conversation in the *liugua Franca*, then
used by the Caribs, but as it would be tire-
some to our readers to continue it, we have
translated the rest into such plain or hyperbolical
English as suits the conversation.

"The Carib Chief is very welcome," said the
young officer, impressively, after a short pause,
for the news of the revolt of that race against
the British authority at St. Vincent was known

to him. "Will the Captain Baron drink King George's health in some eau de vie?"

"Le Capitan Baron will. He is grateful."

The young officer produced some brandy, and the Carib tossed off a large glassful without a wink, and placed the empty glass on the table, with a deep sigh of satisfaction, merely saying :

"That is good !"

"The Captain Baron wishes to speak some words to the English Captain," said Arthur.

"Will he say what it is?"

"Mayboy has told his brethren at St. Vincent to fight against the English—that is bad. The Caribs of Dominica will fight for King George—that is good !"

"Yes, if he is to be trusted," thought the young officer, "this is good news indeed !"

The Carib continued :

"The old women of his tribe scream in his ears : 'Kill the English !' but the Captain Baron

says, 'No!' English officer saved his back from the whip—he is grateful."

"The English Captain will be very glad if the Carib Chief will assist him; his men are few, and his enemies many."

The Carib Chief waited until Arthur had done speaking, and then said, after a short pause:

"Listen. The black ants and the white ants conspired together to turn out the red ants from their nests, and then to kill them all. They called into their council a wasp and a red ant chief, who was a traitor. They met, and all took an oath but the wasp. The wasp wished to sting the red ant traitor to death, but the chief of the white ants prevented him, saying that the red ant was wanted. The wasp heard all that was spoken, and flew to warn the chief of the red ants, whom he loved."

"I wonder whether he is to be depended on?" muttered Arthur: "I must try him further."

Can Le Baron remember what was said in the palaver?"

"Yes; the Carib never forgets what his ears hear. The white ants of Guadaloupe are to come in ships to Rocroix, from Marie Galante and the white and black ants of Dominica are to rise and help them to destroy the red ants but the wasps will assist the red ants."

"Will the white ants swarm in great numbers?"

This was rather a puzzling question to the Carib, whose powers of computation were limited; but he soon brightened up, for he remembered the words Le Blanc had used, and he said:

"Le Blanc says about three hundred soldiers come from Guadaloupe."

"And who is Le Blanc?"

The Carib Chief was silent.

"Where is Rocroix?"

The Carib pointed towards the north-east.

"Can Le Baron guide the English Captain there?"

"When the time comes, he will."

"Will the Carib Chief tell the English Captain who the red ant traitor is?"

There was a sudden flashing of the eye, and a quivering of the muscles on the Carib's face, but he did not reply. This time the young officer repeated the question.

"The wasp will take care of the red ant traitor, as the spider keeps the fly until he is hungry: the fly is in the web, and he cannot escape. It is good."

Again Arthur Conway pressed the Carib to tell him who the traitor was; but had he known the native character better, he would not have wasted his breath in questions which Le Baron did not choose to answer. The Carib was silent.

"Has the Chief anything more to tell the English Captain?" said Arthur, somewhat impa-

tiently, for he was rather provoked at the man's silence.

"Marinier is a bad man."

"Ha! that is the man who they say has been tampering with the soldiers. Does the Captain Baron know who this Marinier is?"

"Marinier is a stranger; he does not belong to Dominica. It is late; Le Baron must go."

"Will not the Chief taste the eau de vie again?" said the young officer, pouring out a glass, and offering it to the Carib, perhaps with a hope that the spirit might make him more communicative; but the Chief drank it off, said that it was good, and raising the young officer's hand to his lips, glided out of the room, and in a moment was lost amidst the wilderness of shrubs.

Arthur Conway did not attempt to oppose his departure, but undressed himself quietly, and threw himself on his bed, drawing the mosquito curtains around him, to keep off those

horrid bores. But some hours passed before sleep visited him.

There was, indeed, much to keep Arthur awake. The Carib's information, although rather vague and unsatisfactory, was not to be doubted or despised. Conspiracy, treachery, were abroad. The power of Victor Hugues was considerable; he had gained several advantages over the English, and being a bold and enterprising man, he would not hesitate to make a dash at a British island so slenderly guarded. Proclamations and circulars, emanating from him, had been distributed over the island: that was a serious subject, too. Possibly the batteries of Fort Charlotte and Morne Bruce might protect Roseau from a direct attack, if the number of assailants was small; but they might land anywhere they pleased.

The British settlers and merchants would no doubt form a formidable and trustworthy militia, and they must be called upon immediately; but what part would the negroes, the coloured

people, and the foreign settlers take? Liberty and equality were the watchwords of the Republicans; the slaves would instantly rise to throw off their yoke, and then what horrors would ensue! Who was Le Blanc? who was the English traitor? and who was Marinier? Some vague suspicion crossed his mind that the young Frenchman he had seen at La Belle Étoile was concerned in this conspiracy; but that suspicion was quickly banished, when he remembered the society in which he had met him. Rosalie, too, had called him her cousin, François Devrien; and the old planter was a stanch admirer of the Bourbons.

Marinier, however, must be watched. He would send a trusty soldier down to Roseau, to see if he could discover who and what this Marinier was. Every precaution must be taken against surprise. If he could see the Carib Chief again, he might be made useful as a watch upon the other party; but Arthur well knew that it was useless to look for him, if he did

not wish to be found. The vague hints which the Carib Chief had thrown out about the traitor being his personal enemy, coupled with Jack Diver's confusion when asked to dinner, and to give his assistance, might have created suspicion, had not the young officer been impressed with the idea that no Englishman could possibly be a traitor to his country.

"The friends of the people" were scarcely known to him, even by name; his mind had been too much occupied with other things: yet suspicion, vague and uncertain, haunted him; for young as he was, he had already learned to suspect. He could not bring himself to forego the anticipated pleasures of the riding party. Margaret Gordon would be there; he would cultivate her acquaintance; and thinking of her sweet voice, her speaking eyes, and golden hair, he fell asleep—to dream of Edith.

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groping his way until he was stopped by a door, which was fast.

"*Sacristie!*" muttered Le Blanc, between his teeth, as he knocked at the door with a peculiar rap. "I hope there is some one here to receive us, I don't want to spend the night in the open air. The very streets smell of the accursed vomito."

Apparently, a shower of rain had fallen in the town, although not a cloud had obscured the sky; for there was a dank, earthy, sickening steam rising as if out of the very hearts of the stones, so powerful was the night dew.

A faint light, however, soon gleamed through the chinks of the door, and a faltering step could be heard crossing the paved yard inside.

"Who dat?" said a small squeaking voice, somewhat between the croak of a raven and the scream of a parroquet.

"It is I—Le Blanc—come, be quick, El Mono—open the door and let us in."

"Who dat? You be berry imperent fall
call me El Mono."

"Don't you know my voice? It is I—
Blanc. Open the door, you old fool."

"Know you berry well—but why you c
me El Mono, eh? Why you call me ole fo
eh?"

"I'll call you what you please, only open t
door and get the horses in."

"Dat not do."

"Eh bien, then; citoyen maitre de dan
Auguste Pierrot, will you do me the favour
open the door?"

"Ha, ha, ha," screamed the parrot-like voi
as a key turned in the lock, and the door w
pulled inwards on its rusty hinges.

Le Blanc led his horse into the court-ya
and was closely followed by the Master
the transport. As soon as they had pass
something that stood behind the door, shut
turned the key, and, drawing back the sha

He drew the focus of a dark lantern on the forms of the men and horses. In the dense darkness in which the thing stood, it was difficult to distinguish whether it was a man or a monkey, and even on a closer and clearer inspection, it would have been no easy task to determine his species, but for the shrill parrot-like voice that issued from his lips.

This creature was not above four feet and a half in height, but held himself very upright like an old man (he was nearly eighty). His colour was black, rusted by age; his eyebrows were perfectly white, and two or three twisted woollen patches of the same colour were dotted on his skull; he had no forehead; his bleared eyes were nearly lost in his head; his nose, with huge, gaping nostrils, was merged in his cheek-bones, but his nearly toothless mouth, with great, flabby lips, extended from ear to ear;—and such ears! they flapped like an elephant's. The most prominent feature, however, was his

chin, which stuck out nearly at right angles from his nasty, scraggy, bare neck. His long, bony arms nearly reached his great, splay feet, in the middle of which were stuck his thin, knifey legs. His whole habiliment was a striped, blue cotton shirt.

This thing now came forward, as if satisfied with his scrutiny, and, making a very elaborate bow to Le Blanc, said, with a grimace impossible to describe :

“How you do, citizen? Vil you do me the onor to inderduce udder citizen?”

“Are you gone mad, Auguste? Put the horses in the stable, and then show us a light up stairs.”

“Hi—hi!—what dat? Youself mad! We all broders now—all equal.”

This self-elected equality amused Le Blanc exceedingly. There was something so irresistably comical, and yet so degrading, in this withered, ape-like, but vain thing, fraternizing,

that, with the laugh which he could not altogether suppress, there mingled a sigh of inquiry :

“Are all men equal?”

The wizened negro perceived the laugh, and understood it. But, treasuring it up for a future occasion, he said nothing then. Taking the horses by their bridles, he led them into a stable already nearly filled.

Le Blanc, bidding Jack Diver follow him, groped his way along a boarded passage, up a flight of rickety stairs, and threw open a door.

Three men were seated at a table: two of them were smoking and playing at cards; the third, shading his face with his hands, was reading a letter. Before the players were some bottles and glasses, and, flanking these, a pair of pistols. One of these was immediately snatched up, cocked, and pointed at the intruders.

“Hein!” said one, lowering the muzzle.
“Is that you, Le Blanc? Excuse my rudeness.”

"There is nothing to excuse, my dear Le Bar. If you had pulled the trigger, it would have been *bien autre chose*. But why have you these weapons so handy?"

"Not three minutes ago, the door was gently pushed half-open, and some one looked in," replied Le Bar. "We all three ran out to see who it was, but, *sacristie!* we found nobody and Pierrot declares, on his honour as a French citizen, that he never unlocked the outer gate. So I got the tools ready to mark him, should he come again."

"It must have been the wind, or the cat, or El Mono himself," said Le Blanc, carelessly throwing himself on to a sofa, which creaked and groaned, and threw up a cloud of dust as he did so. "What's your game?"

"Beggar my neighbour, I should think," said the man who was reading the letter, in a low voice, and in English.

"Ha! Marinier, *mon cher*, is that you?"

Come here, and sit beside me ; I want to talk to you."

This Marinier immediately did, and, crumpling up the letter, put it into his pocket.

"Yes, I want to talk to you about this youngster at Morne Bruce—there is more in him than I imagined. But first let us get rid of this *sacré* John Bull sailor."

"There is a hammock slung in a room inside there. He can turn in, if he likes."

Jack Diver had sat down, and was sulky and silent, for his head ached, and his eyes were heavy and bloodshot ; but, as he had drunk pretty freely of the punch at La Belle Etoile, and had been exposed to the sun during the heat of the day, this was neither strange, nor anything to be frightened at, so he took advantage of the offer, and rolled himself up in the hammock, where we will leave him, for the present.

Marinier, after putting him to bed, returned, and, sitting down on the sofa by Le Blanc, they

conversed together in a low tone, so as not to overheard by the players.

"You know more about this youngster than any of us, Marinier. How came you to find out that he had robbed this coarse sailor of his mistress? It is true, however, and that is how I hooked my fish—not that I think he is worth much, now we have caught him."

"Psha! is it any wonder that a girl should prefer a handsome, fair-skinned youth, to coarse, weather-beaten rascal?"

"Did he really seduce her?"

"No, no, the girl loved him, *voilà tout*, and we took advantage of the knowledge to play little game of our own. Jealousy is a good tool."

"You have a particular reason then for wanting to ruin this young Englishman?"

"Not I; I only obey orders."

"Strange enough," said Le Blanc, musingly.

"Another man told me that this sailor Captain

hated this young officer. Could he have found it out by instinct?"

"And who is this other?"

"The Captain Baron, the chief of the Caribs; no less. It is certainly an odd coincidence."

"But this strange savage has a motive, no doubt, for bringing this man on shore?"

"Yes, he wants to kill the sailor."

"And why?"

"Because this rough Captain wanted to flog him; had him tied up on the deck of the ship, where I had sent him to look about."

"And how was this flogging prevented?"

"I don't know; the Carib would not tell me."

"I see it all. It is this youngster who has saved the Carib's back from the lash. Take care that this savage does not play us a trick: I would not trust him too far."

"The Caribs have risen against the English at St. Vincent, and they hate them in this island

as well as we do. The Caribs have never forgotten nor forgiven the English seducing a number of their people on board one of their ships and carrying them off as slaves."

"And I would do the same with this savage."

"That would be both unjust and cruel."

"But it would be politic."

"What! enslave him; punish him on bare suspicion, of the most vague and uncertain kind?"

"The end sanctifies the means."

"One would think you were a Jesuit by your arguments."

"I was one."

Le Blanc started at this cool admission, and frowned abruptly.

"What! a Jesuit taking an oath, and conspiring with Republicans, to overthrow the allies of the Legitimists! Impossible!"

"Hush! they will hear us," quietly replied

Marinier. "As I said before, the end sanctifies the means. I obey my orders simply, and do not judge of their merits."

"And your orders are to ruin this young officer at any cost?"

"Yes, to thwart him in everything—to injure him in his reputation—in fact, to destroy him alive; and if that cannot be accomplished, he must die."

"And you have followed him here?"

"Yes, I have come all the way from England, to this dangerous climate, for the sole purpose of effecting his ruin."

"This I cannot understand."

"No, it is beyond your comprehension yet; but you will help me?"

"I hate treachery," said Le Blanc, impatiently, shrugging up his shoulders.

"What are you doing here then?"

"All's fair against a declared enemy; besides, you don't suppose I came only to raise this vile conspiracy?" said Le Blanc, frankly.

"The villainous brutes! I wish I had nothing to do with it. But, like you, I only obey orders of my superior."

"And that superior is Victor Hugues?"

"Yes, for the time being."

"Take care, Le Blanc, take care. Swimming eyes, voluptuous kisses, warm sighing arms, silky tresses, are dangerous snares for the young and unwary, but excellent tools for the wise and cautious."

"What do you mean?" said Le Blanc, almost savagely.

"That your love for the violet-eyed daughter of the old Legitimist, at La Belle Étoile is well known. You have just come from the meeting. The Republican dined with the Bourgeois."

"Who told you this?"

"No one—I guessed it."

"This is very extraordinary!"

"Not at all. Your abrupt departure from the meeting, after a little speech made by

mulatto, Lemantin, made me think ; and, after you were gone, I pumped the beast. Somehow or other, he knows of your attachment. The rest I guessed by your not coming here sooner. *Apropos*, he is jealous of you—he too loves your Rosalie !” and Marinier watched, with his small, keen, black eyes, the effect of his words.

“He ! that brutal ogre ! that monster presume to lift up his bleared eyes to the queenly Rosalie !” cried Le Blanc, savagely.

“Hush ! What are you talking about ? Surely all men are equal, in your creed ?”

“And the Carib, too, told me to beware of the mulatto, Lemantin,” continued Le Blanc, without heeding the interruption. “This is singular—very singular !”

And suddenly a thought occurred to him—a strange thought, too — on which the young Frenchman founded as strange a resolution.

“He is easily roused—he is not a Republican at heart—jealous, in love, ardent, young—what a capital tool !” thought Marinier. “Did he

not say that there was more in this young Englishman than he imagined? He must have dined at La Belle Étoile too. If I can but make him jealous, *c'est une affaire finie*. Now for a slight thrust to find his guard."

"This English officer is very handsome, is he not?"

"Yes," replied Le Blanc, frankly.

"Young as he is, he had, in England, already acquired the reputation of a lady-killer."

"Well! what of that?"

"Oh! nothing; but as he, too, dined at La Belle Étoile to-day, he must have seen your Roule."

"Roule? you know everything, citoyen!"

"As I have to report to England everything concerning this youngster, I am obliged to watch and listen what I can concerning all he does. It was then you that I ascertained the fact of his having dined there."

"Roule?"

"You admitted it. But never mind. Did he pay much attention to your mistress?—don't frown, I have my reasons for asking it."

François rapidly ran over in his mind the events of the evening. The disagreement with his mistress annoyed and vexed him; he could not forget her words :

"Then neither God nor man would sanction such an union !"

The evident attention paid by her to the English officer had not escaped his notice; nay, he had seen their eyes meet. But then he had been flirting with the fair-haired Marguerite, and Rosalie might have done it to pique him. Besides, their parting had been a tender one. How could he then be jealous? Again, although Arthur Conway was his enemy, opposed to him in every way, he had, even on their short acquaintance, taken a strange liking to him. Nothing would give him greater

pleasure than to meet the English officer face to face in the open field, but to act treacherously to him individually was not in accordance with his daring and adventurous character. Marinier had quite mistaken his man. A frank and chivalrous disposition, although employed on such a dangerous mission as the young Frenchman now was, is often a match for cunning. Frankness often stops on the brink of the precipice, but cunning overreaches itself, and falls.

Marinier had made up his mind to use Le Blanc as a tool against Arthur Conway, having already, through his means, succeeded in entrapping Jack Diver as an auxiliary. Le Blanc had jumped at this bait readily enough, because being deputed by Victor Hugues to raise the island against the British Government, and to take it, if possible, by any means, he had no scruple, on the principle that all is fair in war, in seducing the Master of the transport from his allegiance, that he might, through him, obtain

intelligence of the movements of the small British force then on the island, and by giving false information of their own premeditated attack, so as to get the British regulars to march to a part of the island where they would find no enemy.

During the pause which ensued, before Le Blanc replied to the Jesuit's question, three slight though peculiar raps were given on the door. At the word "*entrez*," the Carib glided noiselessly into the room, seated himself quietly in a corner, filled his pipe, and commenced smoking. No one took any notice of him, for he was a privileged person, and could come and go as he liked. Marinier, however, looked at him with a displeased countenance, but immediately resumed his conversation with Le Blanc, forgetting that the ears and eyes of a savage are much keener than our own, although at the time his senses may appear to be utterly abstracted.

"You do not answer, *mon cher*," resumed Marinier. "Is it possible that this Captain Conway has already begun his old tricks again? He cannot cross a pretty woman's path without trying his power of fascination on her and seducing her affections, young as he is."

"In this case, Marinier, he will not succeed."

"How can you tell? few women, they say, can resist him."

"With Rosalie he will fail, I tell you."

"Why so?"

"Simply, because she already loves your humble servant."

"You are not jealous, then?"

"I jealous! ha, ha!" and the young Frenchman laughed loudly and merrily. "I jealous? what a joke! I, whose motto is *vive l'amour, vive la bagatelle*, although for my own amusement I am engaged in a conspiracy. No, I tell you no; she loves me, and I love her."

"But you will have to leave this island soon."

and then she will be fully exposed to his fascinations."

"Wrong again, *mon prêtre*, we shall soon be masters here."

"But, Le Blanc, listen to me: suppose by any chance you fail—you are discovered—taken, what will be your fate? and her's? You will die, and she will lie in his arms; her warm kisses will be breathed on him, those living charms which where your own will be your enemy's. Yes, I see them now clasped in each other's arms, the happy bridegroom and the blushing bride, and you a mouldering corpse, forgotten and despised. Will you let these things be?"

A visible emotion passed over Le Blanc's face at this picture, but he said, simply :

"I do not know, Marinier, what motive you have in destroying this young Englishman, but I can as yet (these words were pronounced slowly and with a marked emphasis) feel no

jealousy towards him, although he is enemy."

"May you not have cause to do so! still warn you that he is a dangerous man to women."

"It may be so, and I will watch him closely."

"And if you discover anything?"

"I will do as the Carib yonder said he would do to his enemy—I will kill him."

"Nay, we do not want his death."

"What then do you want?" exclaimed Blanc, with surprise.

"Infamy—misery—in short, a living death."

"You must have some terrible motive, beyond my comprehension, in this. I cannot understand compassing his death, but to destroy him living I cannot."

"I have no motive—I do but obey orders."

"You want to persuade me, Marinier, that you are but a blind instrument; why then

did you endeavour just now to cause my jealousy?"

"I did but try you—you are not jealous, and can trust your Rosalie. Well then, as it is your object and mine to get this young Englishman out of the way, so that he may be taken unawares, let your Rosalie encourage him—let him bask in the sunshine of her eyes until the time comes; he will desert his post, he will be disgraced, he will be jilted, and perhaps be taken prisoner."

"It is a dangerous and unpromising experiment," replied Le Blanc, musingly. "The charmer may be charmed. Am I so mad as to leave a warm-hearted creole girl to the tender sighs and glances of a red coat; good-looking, young, and as you say, a lady-killer, without being tolerably certain of gaining some great end by it?"

"You *are* jealous then," said Marinier, with a bitter sneer, "and refuse your assistance to one who has already served you?"

"I am not jealous, *mon prêtre*, nor do I refuse you, but I should like to consider it a little more; and, *apropos*, how have you served our cause?"

"By already having corrupted the fidelity of some of the soldiers, and soon I hope to have more. I do not want for money, and use it freely."

"Stay, Marinier, before we go any further, will you tell me this young Englishman's history?"

"Not to-night, Le Blanc, not to-night; I must leave you now, it is getting very late. What are your plans for to-morrow?"

"I am going on a riding party to the falls of the Roseau River with Mademoiselle Devrien, this young Englishman, and a fair-haired girl, called Marguerite Gordon."

"And after that?"

"I dine at Morne Bruce, with this rough sailor."

"You will have a capital opportunity to-

morrow—think well on what I have said ; it is easily done, and there is no risk.”

“ I will think of it to-night. How close and sultry it is. The sailor must be nearly suffocated in that little room with the door shut. I’ll go and have a look at him—*au revoir*, Marinier.” Having said this in his careless off-handed manner, Le Blanc, passing the card-players, who were both nodding over the table, went into the den where Jack Diver was lying in his hammock. He was certainly asleep, but was tossing about restlessly and moaning. A dark flush was spread over his forehead and face, and he breathed heavily. Le Blanc looked at him for a minute attentively—then felt his pulse, and put his hand on the sailor’s naked breast.

The young Frenchman said nothing, but turned away with a shake of the head, and went back into the outer room. Marinier was gone. Le Bar and Petun were fast asleep, but

the Carib sat in the corner, in exactly the same attitude. Le Blanc went up to him, and said in a low tone :

“ Le Baron, the vomito is about to rob of your victim. Go and see.”

The Carib arose slowly, took up a can and went in. It would have made a fine study for a painter.

The dark form of the savage, standing there immovable as a statue, shading the light with one hand, and watching with his bright glistening eyes the countenance of his enemy.

The Master started in his sleep, as if conscious of the presence of his foe, and muttered, incoherently :

“ Tie him up Andrews. Lay on—one ! (that oath—that oath ! Shall I shoot him Thirsty—thirsty !”

Then his eyes opened, red and bloodshot. The Carib blew out the light, and glided out of the room.

"Some drink, some drink!" cried the Master, in a husky voice. "My throat is parched and my brain on fire!"

But no one heeded him.

"He is in for the fever, is he not?" said Le Blanc, as the Carib returned.

"Yes; Le Baron may now go."

"Whither go you?"

"Le Baron is going to the mountains."

"Will you have the canoe ready at the creek to-morrow as the sun sinks beneath the wave? I must return to Guadaloupe."

"The Carib will be there."


So saying, without any further parley, the Chief quitted the room.

Le Blanc awoke the sleepers with the pleasing intelligence that the terrible vomito was in the house. They were at first a little startled, but they were both well-seasoned; and Le Bar immediately said that it would not do to send for a doctor, but that old Pierre was a capital

nurse; and it was soon determined that the sailor should be put in his charge.

The withered old negro was straightway summoned, and the Master placed under his especial care; and, to say the truth, El Mono was no unskilful practitioner in this particular disease, which in many cases is more successfully treated by extreme watchfulness and care, after the burning fever has subsided, than by medicine.

Le Bar and Petun went up stairs to bed, and the young Frenchman threw himself on the sofa; but he did not sleep, for there rose a horrible picture before his eyes—La Belle Étoile in flames—drunken negroes dancing round it, screeching with delight as the inmates fell scorched and bleeding one by one amidst its ruins. Rosalie—his Rosalie—flying, with her long hair loose and streaming in the wind, from a hideous, infuriated, mob of savage negroes, with the mulatto, Lemantin, at their



head. She staggers—she falls, and he not there to save her. All that Marinier had insinuated to him was but as the shadow of a shade, when his imagination conjured up this picture before his eyes, and the reality would come—must come, if the insurrection should take place; and he, her lover, an active promoter of this very thing. Oh, hideous! The blood rushed to his head—his eyes. He sprang from the sofa, and paced the room impatiently.

“I will do it—I must do it!” he said, aloud. “Yet, how can I get it conveyed to him? The Carib? He goes with me to Guadaloupe, and even in that short time, the negroes may rise. Rosalie? No, no: not her—not her. Marinier? He would open the letter. Le Bar—Petun? They would think I was betraying them. Ha! old Pierre shall do it. I will rouse his vanity. No one can suspect him, and I can say to him that it is a communication of importance from the Master of the transport. At all events, I will write it.”

ARTHUR CONWAY.

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wherewith to seal or fasten the letter, but that did not trouble him, as he had no idea that the negro could, or would read it; so, blowing out the lights, and retiring to the sofa, he put the letter under his pillow, and soon fell asleep.

In about an hour, old Pierre came out of the little room with a candle in his hand; he looked round, and after a short pause began, as most negroes do, talking aloud to himself.

"Hi, dey all gone couchee—wonder if leetle drap ob rum left—ole Pierre see," and he proceeded to examine the bottles. The noise, half awakening Le Blanc, he turned himself on the sofa restlessly: in doing this, the pillow was displaced and the letter became exposed.

The negro stood quite still, and the young Frenchman soon gave evidence that he was fast asleep.

The wizened old negro stole to his side, and looked for a minute at the handsome countenance of the sleeper with a truly diabolical expression, and muttered: "What now prevent

ole Pierre puttee de knife into dat man. I callee me de ole fool, de monkey; same tin him say all men are broders. Hi—wurra dat a letter!" and with the curiosity of an ape he stooped down and gently removed the letter and held it to the light.

The sleeper slept on.

"Capt'n, Capt'n, Con-Con Con-vay—Mon Bruce—Hi, him traider—he callee ole Pierre a fool, de monkey, and him traider—Hi, hi He turned the letter round, and perceiving that it was not sealed, continued his muttering: "Ole Pierre man ob honour, can't oben dis."

Still he twisted the paper round and round. Curiosity so inherent in chamber-maids, monkeys, and negroes, soon overcame old Pierre's sense of honour and he opened it.

The sleeper slept on.

The old negro, holding the letter close to the candle, spelt it word by word, commenting on its contents as he read. When he came to the part where it said that La Belle Étoile was

attacked by negroes headed by the mulatto, mantin, he chuckled, and grinned, and showed his nearly toothless gums. "By golly good—see dat dam ole astocrat burn—burn de coloured bredren dance and sing round de—den Obi come fright mulatto away too—k men ab all—white gals ab soft kin. Ah!

Then where the letter ran, "when you this I shall be far from your reach," he

"Ole Pierre take dam good care ob dat ; tra afficer not get him at all—ole Pierre get . Pose I take him now—go up de Marne, buckra afficer. No—dat not do—poil de —no fire—no kisse white gal's lips."

Here the sleeper turned round on the sofa.

Pose him wake now, missee de letter, what Pierre do—muss put him back—marrow ning say go up de Morne get physic from tittle for sailor man, den Frenchman say— Pierre, you is one faidful man, takee dis r—den he gib me one two dollars, but tra afficer no get him ; dat do berry well,"

so saying, the old negro refolded the letter : replaced it where he had found it, and taking away the candles, he went back into the room where his patient was tossing about : moaning heavily.

CHAPTER XII.

BEFORE proceeding with our tale, it may be as well to give a slight sketch of the Island of Dominica, for insignificant spot as it may appear on the face of the earth, it is nevertheless "beautiful exceedingly." Standing as it does nearly half way between the two rich and lovely French Islands, Martinique and Guadeloupe, it was at the time in which our story is laid a place of some consequence. Emancipation and free-trade had not then cast down and destroyed the fortunes and the energies of the

planters. Thousands of
sacrificed and thrown away
held, to regain what we had
new possessions. We were
end, as England generally
cost? and for what, latter
Well may these islands be
sepulchres," "White men's
his murderous engines, de
men; the vomito blasts
breath; slow creeping dys
away; the hurricane, with i
over them; the quivering,
adds to the heaps; the
and the Johnny-crows hav
are they gorgeously painted
if in bitter mockery, hath a
with grace, with beauty, an
lofty mountains rise to the
to the summits with brilli
fantastic shrubs; sparkling
green; foaming waterfalls

colours; bright, grassy glades; precipitous, frowning cliffs; lofty palm-trees, slender, tapering, and graceful; massive cotton, mangrove, locust, and bullet-trees of prodigious growth; bamboos tall as the top-gallant mast of a noble ship; spreading sandbox-trees, whose fruit rattles in the wind; the dark-green manchineel, with its lovely apple, the very emblem of the soil and climate—all beautiful to the eye, but at the core full of treachery and poison; groves of citron, lime, shaddock, and orange-trees; rows of sweet fruit-bearing tamarinds lining the margin of the sea; perpetual verdure—ever-varying light and shade; gorgeous flowers; fantastic creepers; terrific thunder-storms; rainbows spanning the valleys all day long; wild broken gullies; sheer precipices; paths winding round the mountain sides, where a false step would hurl the horse and rider five hundred feet down into a sparkling stream. In fact, a chaos of bewildering beauties, of dazzling colours,

of majestic influences, impossible to the painter and utterly indescribable.

Such are some of the characteristics of the sky and scenery of the island in which our story is laid.

* * * *

Arthur Conway rose early, and dressed himself with unusual care. On looking over the sea, he observed a deep purple haze hanging over the horizon. The vessels in the offing loomed larger than usual, and a long rolling swell was breaking against the cliffs, although for many miles out to sea there was not a ripple on the surface of the ocean. Still the trade-wind was whirling the light fleecy clouds against the mountain tops, and the atmosphere over the land was bright and clear.

Arthur had never before risen so early, and although he remarked the peculiar colour and depth of the haze, he saw nothing unusual in it.

but concluded that it was the mist of the morning, which the sun would soon disperse.

His little stable stood just behind his quarters, and he went there to see if his horse was being saddled.

Mention has already been made of a younger Tom Ellam, the son of the gamekeeper of Morley Hall. He had enlisted into Arthur's regiment out of attachment to his young master, as he always persisted in calling him. He was a steady, well-educated young man for his station, and might have been promoted, but he preferred being about the Captain's person as batman; and Arthur, off duty, treated him as an old familiar friend, in whom he could put every confidence.

Young Tom Ellam was in the stable saddling the horse, whose bright shining coat and sleek appearance showed that he, too, was a favourite.

"Ellam," said our hero, as he stood looking

at them, "I want to speak a few words to you ~~men~~ before I go out. Tie Tom's head up and listen ~~me~~ to me."

"Yes, Sir."

"Have you heard of any fresh attempt on the part of the rebels to seduce the soldiers, by giving them money?"

"Yes, Sir; Tom Connolly—fighting Tom, as he is called—told me that he was in a grog-shop a few days ago, with some more of his kidney, pretty well cut, Sir. Tom, you know, Sir, had been in some of those secret societies in Ireland before he enlisted, and he is, saving your presence, a Roman, and so were the rest of the party. Raw rum, you know, Sir, soon gets into a man's head, be it ever so strong, and they set to discoursing, as Tom calls it, about the wrongs and rights of old Ireland, and such like—more fools they. Then one fellow said how he had been out, and then another, till they got giving signs and words, and such

like, and there was a great row, all speaking together. All this time there was a man sitting quietly in a dark corner."

"Did Connolly notice what this man was like?"

"Yes, Sir, he was sober enough for that. He was a little dark man, with black hair, and sharp, cunning, small black eyes, with a hook nose, and a down look, dressed in rusty black."

"I don't know such a man. Go on, Ellam."

"But I do, I think, Sir," replied the soldier, gravely. "I saw just such a man as Tom describes once at Morley Hall for a few minutes when you were out, Sir; but I should like to see him to make sure of my man."

"At Morley!" replied Arthur, in astonishment: "impossible! You must be mistaken, Ellam."

"Possible, Sir; still I should like to get one peep at him. I am not easily deceived in faces."

I have looked out for poachers too much for that."

"What makes you connect this man with Morley?"

"Why, Sir, after crossing himself, and showing that he was one of them, he began asking questions about you, in particular, Sir. How you were liked; what sort of an officer you were; and such like. Tom, begging your pardon, Sir, said you were too damned high; that you had punished him for no fault; and that he did not care how soon the land-crabs had your body and the devil your soul. Tom didn't mean it, your honour, he only said it to see how the land lay. So the little fellow pulled out a long purse, and ordered more drink. Well, the rum came, and they all got very drunk—all but Tom Connolly. By-and-by, the man says to him: 'I can't think, my fine character how you Irishmen, 'specially you who are good Catholics, can fight for the bloody tyran

That's his very words, Sir. Tom said that he did not know how it was—that he had 'listed when very drunk—that he had tried to slip away once or twice, but that he had always been caught—but, curse him, he would go on the first opportunity. From this the man went on to say that a good deal of money might be made if there was a row, and the men would bite off the balls from the cartridges, and more, if any would come over to the French, or give good information of what was going on up here. Tom listened to it all, and said he would think about it, and see if he could get any to join him. The man then slipped an eight-dollar piece into Tom's hand, and went out."

"And why did not Connolly come and report this to me immediately?"

"He didn't like, Sir; as they were all more or less drunk, and stopped out too late: and it was only last night that Tom told me of it."

"It would have been better had he done so

at once ; but never mind, more, perhaps, may be made of it as it is."

The young officer then proceeded to give Tom Ellam his instructions, which were simple enough, if well executed. He and Fighting Tom were to go down into Roseau that very morning ; they were to call at the grog-shop, and to ask if the man had been there, and to make an appointment with him, if possible. Ellam was then to go round to the storekeepers and tradespeople employed by the military, and to ascertain, if he could, who Marinier was, and with whom he associated. If they could succeed in falling in with the stranger, they were to take any bribe he might offer, and apparently fall into his views. Ellam was then to return to the Morne, to report his failure or success, leaving Tom in the town to be on the watch.

When poor Arthur mounted, he had some scruples of conscience in quitting his post after what Tom Ellam had told him. It was his

duty to watch carefully and to be perpetually on his guard, as treachery was abroad; but the opportunity of so soon again seeing the winning Marguerite was too tempting. No immediate danger was to be apprehended, and he would defer calling upon the officers of the Militia until the following day.

He had not yet learned to sacrifice his inclination to his duty.

Yet it was not without some misgiving, some sinking of the heart, that he turned his horse's head from the Morne and rode slowly down the steep zigzag road that led to the skirts of the town. Once on the smooth turf, however, he threw it off, and cantered gaily along to the appointed rendezvous.

Dashing across the ford he had passed on the previous evening, and scaring away the women and children who were desporting themselves in the clear stream, he reined in his horse under the shadow of a dark red cliff, and looked round. No one had yet arrived.

New as Arthur was to a tropic land, the scene before him was full of novelty and enchantment.

At his feet, jumping and tossing itself in miniature falls, ran the glowing little stream. Hundreds of dusky women, maids and matrons, young and old, naked to the waist with nothing but a scanty piece of gaudy striped cotton stuff round their loins and reaching half-way down their legs, were busy washing in the stream and spreading clothes to dry on the smooth sward by the river's bank, chattering and screaming like so many parrots. Here and there an upright though graceful form, with swelling breast and tapering waist, might be seen filling a water-jar of red, polished earth, and then carrying it away on her head with the light step of a gazelle, yet balancing the jar so evenly without the assistance of one hand that not one drop of water could be seen to trickle over the sides. Potbellied urchins of both sexes, of all sizes, hues, and ages, were

running about entirely naked, dipping and *splashing* in the little pools like so many young ducks. A smooth and level piece of turf lay between the river and the houses; these, some white, some red, were mingled with umbrageous mangrove and sandbox-trees, and here and there a cocoa-nut tree or stately palm stood towering above them in bold relief.

The valley of the river was full of shadow. Now and then a straggling ray of the early sun would gild the shrubs on some lofty peak, while an arch of amber-coloured light seemed to rise over the far distant mountain that stands in majesty at the head of the valley, and from whose bosom the bright stream leaps forth, forming a silvery arch. The sides of the Morne appeared one dense mass of foliage of different hues—brown, violet, green, yellow, saffron—blending one into the other, confused yet lovely.

There was life and sound, freshness and variety, beauty and grandeur in the scene

Yet, had our hero known it better, he would have shuddered, and perhaps have thought how like the hours of his first, fond, hopeful, passionate love—beautiful, oh, how beautiful to his youthful fancy, but undermining, poisoning all his after-years. Yes, in the breath of this lovely valley no white man can live, a subtle, sure, and deadly venom lurks beneath its gorgeousness. It is the Valley of the Shadow of Death.

Arthur had dismounted, and was leaning against his horse, contemplating the scene before him with singular feelings. A year ago, he had stood amidst the stately oaks of green old England, rich in everything—in youth, in health, in possessions, in love, in honour. Now he was an exile, his name dishonoured, in comparative poverty, jilted, rejected, scorned; nought but his youth remained, and the freshness of that had passed; the whirlwind of passion had swept over it, and left desolation and melancholy where cheerfulness and hope

and flourished. Again, in the bitterness of his art, he had said all women are jilts, coquettes, things to be bought and sold. At all times, in all places, the last painful interview with her would obtrude itself. There it was, ringing about his brain, dimming his faculties, gnawing his heart, always present night and day. During a fearful storm in the dreaded bay, it had haunted him; it had crossed him when watching the shark from the deck of the schooner; at the mess-table, when hilarity and merriment were around him, he heard her last words; even on parade they would flash across his mind, suddenly, quickly; and now, amidst the noisy laughter, the screams of the negroes, and the murmur of the waters, the voice fell on his ear like the doom of the felon, and he drooped his head as if to conceal the ineffable melancholy that rested on his handsome countenance.

"*Il rêve de sa maîtresse,*" said a sweet female voice, and at the same time the light

stroke of a whip fell gently on Conway's shoulder.

Arthur started, looked up, and blushed when he saw the lovely Rosalie sitting gracefully on her horse close beside him, laughing with him and with her eyes. He saluted her cautiously, but gravely, and looked round as expecting some one else.

"Oh! she will be here directly," said Rosalie archly: "her horse cast a shoe in the deep, and I rode on alone, for fear you gentlemen should become impatient."

"You are bold, Mademoiselle, to trust yourself in these times."

"There is nothing to be afraid of, Conway: I have done so for two years, never been insulted — except, indeed, when Rosalie, recollecting herself and merrily: "and that happened a few weeks ago when a tall mulatto, who was a little taller than I was, a very pretty girl, and he was

me for a wife. Don't tell my cousin François of this, it might make him jealous ;—but where is he ?”

“ Yonder he comes, galloping like mad.”

The young Frenchman appeared on horse-back, stretching out at full speed along the turf, and, plunging into the river at the ford, he sent the water splashing, the stones flying, and the women and children screaming like monkeys to the right and left, calling him by all the opprobrious names they could think of in their fright (negroes, and negro women especially, are dreadfully afraid of a horse in quick action), and in a minute he had embraced his cousin, and shaken hands cordially with our hero.

He had found means to seal his note, and had given it to old Auguste Pierrot, who had promised faithfully to leave it at the Morne. His mind was therefore set at ease, and he had quite forgotten his jealousy.

Presently, Marguerite—the winning Marguerite, in the bloom of freshness and beauty,

cantered up, followed by a mule, whose long slinging trot enabled it to keep pace with her horse. This mule had panniers slung across its back, and alongside it ran an active young negro slave.

What Arthur's feelings were when he took her little hand as she held it out to him, who shall say?

Rosalie inquired of her cousin where his sailor friend was? not that she wished his presence at all, for that would have spoiled the little *partie carrée*, and she had made up her mind that Arthur and Marguerite should fall in love with one another; but from curiosity. François replied, that the Captain had commissioned him to make his excuses to the ladies, as he was very stiff and tired from his ride of yesterday, and he had business of importance to attend to; but he took an opportunity to whisper in Arthur's ear the real cause of his absence. They were now ready to start; but, before they set their horses in motion,

François waved his hand in the manner of one about to make a speech, and said: "Ladies and gentlemen, I do not wish to alarm you; but, before we set out, I have to inform you that an Obeah man warned me this morning that something extraordinary would occur to-day. He took me down to the beach, and pointed with his lean withered hand to a deep purple haze hanging over the horizon, very unusual at this time of year. The old man shook like a patient in an ague-fit, and declared that he could hear strange sounds in the air, and that he had seen strange forms rising from the Souffrière. A fisherman who stood by, also declared that he had observed the shoals of mullet, and other small fish, rushing about in an unaccountable manner, as there were no bonitoes or albicores chasing them. Now, what think you of these strange signs and portents?"

"It shall not spoil our ride," said Rosalie, tossing back her veil. "*Allons, en avant, mes-sieurs et mesdames*; come, François, you shall be my *cavalier servente* to-day. Captain Con-

way shall attend on Marguerite : it is my wish and pleasure."

So saying, the lovely creole gave her horse a touch with the whip, and started off, leaving the others to follow as best they might.

Marguerite and Arthur all this time had not spoken beyond the mere good morrow, and they rode on side by side for some distance without exchanging a word.

At length, Arthur mustered up courage to break the ice, and said : " Do you think anything extraordinary will happen to-day, Miss Gordon ?"

What Marguerite was thinking of at that moment, we do not know ; but certain it is that she blushed crimson at this question, and paused ere she replied ; when she did speak her voice, soft, musical, and plaintive, fell on Arthur's ear like the song of the siren :

" These old negroes pretend to a kind of second sight, like our Scotch seers ; you will laugh at me, I fear, Captain Conway, when I confess that I do not altogether disbelieve in them

"I never laugh, Miss Gordon, at what I do not understand, whatever I may think of it," replied Arthur, gravely.

"Do not, I pray you, call me Miss Gordon; it sounds so strange and formal: my name is Marguerite, and I know no other." This was said so simply, and with so much earnestness, and so evidently without any spice of coquetry, that Arthur, though he smiled, felt he could not take it as a compliment paid to him particularly.

"You think, then, that some attention ought to be paid to this old man's warning, Miss Margaret?"

"There again, Miss Margaret; why not Marguerite—plain Marguerite."

She is a coquetish flirt, thought Arthur for a moment, and the dark cloud gathered over his brain; but he looked at her, and it as quickly dissipated. As he did so, their eyes met for the first time, and Marguerite felt that a bright ray of light, like a spark of electricity,

darted through the space between them, and entering the portals of her eyes, it caused the warm blood to rush wildly through her veins.

"You have not answered my question, Marguerite," said Conway, in a softer tone.

"I do not know what to say. This is not the season of the year for any of those awful convulsions of nature, which rend and torment these beautiful islands. No; he probably alluded to some frightful or extraordinary occurrence among mankind. Oh! when will these cruel wars come to an end—when will men cease to be savages!"

"You forget, Marguerite, that I too am a soldier—one of these savages," said Arthur, laughing.

"Pardon me, Captain Conway; young as I am, I have seen many awful sights, and I shudder at the thought of more bloodshed; but you fight for a just and righteous cause, which must and will triumph in the end, for God is with you. Woman as I am, I feel that

I could throw off all that belongs to my sex, and strike a blow on your side; yes, and even die, if by my death a single advantage could be gained. And yet, alas! weak woman can only weep for you—pray for you; but, believe me, if you suffer, so do we. Your bodies and our hearts bleed alike.”

Conway looked at the fair young girl with increasing interest. The energy with which she spoke—the transition from the soft delicate girl to the heroic woman, astonished and delighted him. Her character seemed so simple, so natural, so devoid of all art, that he resolved to study it further. He did not then think of the probable, not to say inevitable, consequences. His senses were ‘attracted, and how could he reflect while resting beside her, with her eyes sparkling with emotion; the bright fresh bloom on her lips and cheeks; her golden clustering ringlets waving in the breeze; her supple and well-rounded form, displayed to advantage by the habit, bending

gracefully with each movement of her horse. He felt that he was gazing on her with uncooled admiration, and with far greater earnestness than cold politeness warranted. But Marguerite did not turn her head away, although her heightened colour betrayed what was passing in her heart—that fluttering, palpitating heart, which now for the first time had suffered itself to be surprised, and only waited for an opportunity of surrendering itself up to the conqueror. And did Marguerite know this? There are some who doubt love at first sight. Alas for poor Marguerite! She had but seen him, and the snare was around her.

“Yes,” said Arthur, resuming the conversation, which had come to a sudden pause; “the courage and devotedness of women far surpass what is called bravery in man. You are very courageous, are you not, Marguerite?”

“I have often been alarmed and terrified but I do not think I was ever really frightened. Last autumn we had a terrific storm, almost

amounting to a hurricane, and, although I felt the deepest awe, I did not feel afraid."

"I have heard that feeling well described in a few lines," said Arthur; "but it was of a strong man, not of a tender girl like you, Marguerite. Shall I repeat them?"

"Oh! do. I love poetry above all things."

"They are supposed to describe the effect of the approach of a fierce hurricane on the captain of a ship :

"The Master on the leeward gangway stood,
Watching the heavens in their threat'ning mood.
Sudden I saw a quiv'ring pallor spread
O'er his dark face, the paleness of the dead
It was not fear, but that mysterious awe,
Which oft rebels against the senses' law,
When nature, clothed in her wildest robe,
Sends forth her terrors o'er the startled globe;
The brave in awe and silence must await,
Then do their best—the rest they leave to fate."

"They are your own; confess it, Captain

not bad to have been written by a red-coat

"I must plead guilty, Marguerite; but should not an officer write verses? In a dismal solitary hour may be wiled away giving loose to the imagination, and reducing the ideas into some tangible shape."

"Then why not give them to the world?"

"Ah! Marguerite; many a pretty thing may be written that will not suit the eye of the public, or bear the critic's lash. The poet may be sensitive, or conscious of inferiority and imperfections. A hundred things keep him back; above all, the fear of ridicule."

"Will you think it a strange request I ask you to let me see some of your poems? I shall not be a severe critic."


any crude effusions of mine, I shall only be too happy to produce them."

Marguerite looked at him earnestly, as if to read what was passing in his mind when he paid her this compliment. It was the nearest approach he had yet made to any expression of interest in her, and it made her nervous and anxious. She felt faint and sick at heart, and quite unable to continue the conversation; and yet she could not have told why; so, to veil her confusion, she proposed that they should quicken their pace, and try to overtake Rosalie and her cousin. Arthur readily consented, though his feelings were wavering; and they rode on for some distance in silence.

They were not, however, aware that a man, apparently bent with age, and mounted on a mule, had been closely following them for some miles. At a crossing of the river, where they stopped for a few moments, to let their horses drink of the cool water, this man passed them;

and, in reply to Arthur's frank good-morrow, he bowed, but did not speak. The young officer did not observe the bitter sneer that curled his lip as he looked at Marguerite; but supposed him to be some surly overseer belonging to a sugar-mill they had passed in the valley. Shortly afterwards, they overtook him in a narrow part of the path, where it overhung the stream; and the old man drew up his mule close to the face of the cliff to suffer them to go by. As Arthur passed, the man turned his head away; but looked fixedly at Marguerite, as if to impress her features in his memory.

By some sudden and hidden impulse, they checked again their horses' speed; and, as they rode on side by side at a foot's pace, the plot was thickening fast. Minute by minute Arthur was losing his self-possession; there wanted but some little accident to hasten the catastrophe—minute by minute the mist of simplicity and childishness that had obscured the



feelings of Marguerite's romantic heart, was waiting before the warm rays of love; yet nothing had passed between them but the interchange of a few sentences, in which word or idea of love had never intruded. Was there nothing in that balmy sky—that scenery—the contiguity—the opportunity that assisted in increasing the tenderness and softness of their glances, and the softness of voices when they again spoke. Who can tell what there and then words might not have spoken, words that can never be recalled, when Marguerite asked a question, which instantly sent the dark cloud whirling round her brain? Yet the words were spoken softly, involuntarily; but they had scarcely fallen from her lips, before Marguerite repented she had uttered them. She had eaten of the fruit of the tree of knowledge suddenly, and fatally.

Marguerite's unfortunate question was simply

this : "Has love never formed the subject of your poetry?" To her surprise, the young officer did not reply; but, turning his head away, as if he had not heard her speak, he muttered something about being a long way behind, and almost rudely started off in a cantata. Marguerite saw that she had offended him by her question. How had she done so? Could he have already loved? Did he still love some fair young girl in England? Alas! her reason guessed the truth, though her heart denied it instantly. Should she shun him as an enemy to her peace of mind—her happiness—nay—her life? Too late—it was all too late now. Oh! no; he was only angry with her curiosity; or perhaps he had not really heard, or had mistaken what she said. She was so glad they were travelling quickly; the ride would soon be over. The presence of others would relieve her embarrassment, and she would take care to be no more left alone with him. She

was confused, and could not conceal it; but whether Arthur perceived it, she could not tell, for he rode on moodily and in silence. At length, a diverging of the narrow track forced him to recollect himself, and to speak; and, to say the truth, he appeared as if waking from some terrible dream. Again he became conscious of the presence of the winning Marguerite, and of his own rudeness; and he turned to her with a sweet, melancholy smile on his lips, and said, in those soft, musical tones which fell so sweetly on a maiden's ear: "Forgive me, dear Marguerite, for my unintentional rudeness. I was thinking of my mother and her sad history. She would have loved you, Marguerite."

And this was true. The dark cloud brought with it not only the happy hours at Morley, and their dismal result, but also his mother's image; her death; and the blemish he had allowed to rest on her good name.

The track led across the river, and along a difficult and narrow path, where only one horse could travel at a time; with a perpendicular cliff above, and the now wilder stream some twenty feet below, rushing through a sombre and narrow gorge, full of sharp bends and curious twists. This path conducted them to the head of the Valley of the Shadow of Death.

The spot that Rosalie had chosen for the repast was singularly wild and picturesque.

Mountains, cliffs, and rocks formed an irregular amphitheatre of gigantic proportions, near the centre of which, was a deep pool of transparent water. On its bosom, floated numerous and beautiful aquatic plants, and here and there a painted teal might be seen sailing or diving amongst them, or settling and smoothing his ruffled plumage in perfect unconcern.

From the bosom of the lofty mountain, over

a ledge full one hundred and fifty feet high, kept the silver stream in one unbroken fall till, meeting with the rocks it threw up a veil of spray and foam, which the sun, now shining partially up the valley, tinged with rainbow-tinted dyes; and high above, where it issued from the mountain's breast, a slender spray bow formed an arch of prismatic colours over the thread of silver. Then, tumbling over the broken ledges in a series of little cascades, it fell, with a loud, murmuring sound, into the silent pool. Issuing from thence, it wound through the deep precipitous shadowy gully before-mentioned.

In every spot, where any soil had lodged, the vegetation was wonderful. A clump of feathery, graceful bamboos fringed one edge of the pool. A single, aged mangrove-tree, with wild, twisting, drooping branches, stood alone on a small piece of soft grass carpeted with lilies of lovely hues, white, bronze, and the deepest purple; and

under the grateful shade of this grim old
the cloth was spread for their repast.

On the far side of the stream, the s
and withered trunk of a huge bullet-tree, i
ing its broken and fantastic arms into ti
gave to the scene an air of melanchol
decay. Two or three dismal Johnny-
attracted probably by the scent of the
vender, flew screaming by, and perched o
old withered tree, undismayed at the pr
of a noble eagle that hovered, with fi
wings, high overhead in the clear atmos
Here Rosalie and her cousin were already
with everything prepared, and a bun
fragrant fern leaves was spread read
Marguerite.

Arthur sprang eagerly off his horse to
Marguerite to alight, but she was o
— — — — — before him. Dear Marguerite

Rosalie, who knew what love was, with the instinctive quickness of woman, perceived, by her manner, that something had happened. So while Arthur and the young Frenchman were loosening the horses' girths and picketing them near the pool, she threw her arms round the fair girl's neck, and kissing her tenderly, whispered kindly: "Something has distressed you, dear Maggie, tell me quickly what it is."

"Oh! there is indeed nothing, dear Rosalie," replied Marguerite, though her looks belied her words.

"Yes, yes, darling, your tell-tale cheeks betray you; he has been whispering strange-sounding words in your ear—wicked man, to frighten poor Marguerite so."

"Oh! no, no, he is too gentle and considerate for that; but I—" here Marguerite looked wildly round, and let her head fall on Rosalie's bosom. "I—I love him—and I cannot hide it. Oh! what will he think of me, Rosalie?"

"If he has one spark of feeling, dearest, he ~~will~~ will love you as you love him."

"Oh! I fear—I fear—it is too sudden, it ~~bodes~~ bodes good to neither of us. I did not know ~~it~~ it, dear, dear Rosalie, or I would not have come ~~to-day~~ to-day."

"Foolish little thing, you could not have ~~stayed~~ stayed away," said the lively creole, patting her downy cheek; "but hush, compose yourself, for here he comes."

They formed a charming little party, those four, in the bloom of youth and beauty, seated on the lily-decked ground round the snow-white cloth. Rosalie, with ready tact, entered into a lively conversation with our hero, to the great relief of Marguerite, though François began to rally her a little about her lingering behind; but a look from Rosalie stopped him, and he amused her with Parisian gossip and anecdotes, at which Marguerite could not help laughing. To a casual observer, they would have seemed the gayest of the gay; but there was not a

single heart there that did not beat with some strange emotion, the nature of which the kind reader may well understand.

They had finished their repast, but were still seated on the soft grass, as if unwilling to quit so sweet a spot.

"Look," said Marguerite, suddenly; "surely yon distant hill is bending towards us."

Scarcely had she spoken, when a rattling, frightful noise, like thousands of hammers striking on iron forges, yet moving rapidly onwards, and fast increasing in loudness and intensity, deafened their ears.

Mountains bowed their heads, the hills staggered and reeled to and fro like drunken men. The earth shook and rocked beneath their feet.

For a few seconds the party sat gazing on one another, pale, helpless, sick, trembling, awe-struck.

"It is the end of the world. God's will be done," murmured Marguerite.

"Quick!" cried the Frenchman, leaping up

suddenly and catching Rosalie by the hand
"we shall be safer under yon overhanging cliff
than here ; true, it may fall and crush us," he
muttered, "if the world is at an end, but the
detached pieces will not strike us there—quick
—quick !"

Arthur caught Marguerite up in his arms
and rushed to the spot indicated by the French
man.

The shock increased in intensity, the noise
became more deafening, the earth trembled so
convulsively that they staggered on their feet
and Marguerite, instinctively, caught hold of
Arthur's arm to save herself from falling ; he
clasped her to his bosom. Scarcely had they
reached the shelter of the cliff, when a huge
fragment of rock, of several tons' weight, de-
tached from the hill-top, came thundering down
tearing and rending the shrubs and trees
leaving a track as if blasted with fire, and
sending other pieces of rock flying right and
left in its headlong career ; then, crashing

through the mangrove-tree, strewing and scattering its branches in every direction, and snapping the thick trunk like a dried reed-stalk, it bounded into the pool, dividing the waters and throwing up high into the air a sheet of foam that fell like a shower of rain even where they stood.

Rock after rock showered down, the thunder of their fall mingling in fearful melody with the rattling hammering noise of the mighty power. A cloud of dust arose in the valley, and for a moment, obscured the bright blue sky.

Presently, the water in the pool receded from its edges as if the earth was drinking it up, then back again it rushed, bubbling, foaming and hissing; and, in a moment, it flooded the lily-spangled grass plot, and washed up even to the foot of the overhanging cliff: again, for a moment, it receded, and again the water came back deeper than before. The vibrations lessened in force, they ceased, the shock had passed away.

An awful stillness succeeded the fearful noise, and the murmur of the water sounded loudly amidst the silence of the desolate scene. Hush, they could hear each other's heart palpitate, and the breath as it came with a deep sigh from their labouring bosoms. Those few brief seconds had seemed to them ages. They looked at one another like sleepers suddenly awakened. Safe, safe, all safe : but where was the negro boy, and where the horses ? the former with his mule were buried beneath the wreck of the mangrove-tree, crushed, mutilated, disfigured. The horses still stood where they were picketed, though nearly up to their girths in water trembling, sweating, snorting.

Marguerite, as soon as her confused senses returned, released herself gently, with a burning blush on her cheeks, from Arthur's arms ; but not before he had whispered a few words in her ear : " You are not angry with me, dear Marguerite ? there was no time to reflect."

" It is I," murmured she in reply, " who

ought to ask forgiveness ; but oh ! it was very awful."

"I shall never forget those few moments, if you will allow me to remember them."

"Oh ! do not ask me anything now—it is cruel: our dangers are not over yet."

The young officer looked round, and perceived this to be true. The earthquake had passed away, but not its consequences—the water was still rising.

The young men assisted the two still trembling maidens to climb on a rock, out of reach of the water, whilst they determined what was to be done.

"Some huge rock must have fallen into the narrow gully, and dammed the water up," whispered Arthur to the young Frenchman.

"It must be so," replied François ; "we must contrive to loose the horses, and get away from this as quickly as possible. Yet, I do not think there is any danger from the water, or

the horses would have broken away instinctively."

"They are too terrified to move, I fear, and that is all. But come; a little wet will not hurt us."

The two young men waded into the water to release the horses.

As they passed the wreck of the mangrove tree, they discovered the corpse of the negro boy floating about, the wash of the water having disengaged it from the fallen mass. It presented a frightful spectacle, the skull being beaten into pieces, and the spine protruding through the skin.

"We must not let the ladies see or know this, Captain Conway," said the Frenchman; "it would shock them too much."

"I doubt whether they have even thought of him as yet; their senses were too startled and bewildered by the shock. I judge by myself, for I must confess that I should never have

missed him. We must send some men out to give the poor fellow a decent burial."

"Ay," muttered the Frenchman, "if the water recedes, a pretty corpse they will find. The sun, the ants, and the land crabs will have picked him pretty clean before they come; but, never mind: he knows no better, and it will set his mind at ease. Aha! I see now why the Johnny-crows were here. It is well they have no other pickings. Come, Captain Conway, we must think of ourselves, and—may I venture to say—of our mistresses; and leave this poor carrion to the mercies of the Johnny-crows. He is past our help."

There was a certain degree of levity about these words that grated rather harshly on Arthur's senses, although he felt them to be true. He did not, however, reply; but proceeded at once to release the horses. This, indeed, was no easy task, as the water was more than half way up their legs; and some time elapsed before they could accomplish it.

"You were right," said Arthur suddenly, *as* they turned round towards the mangrove-tree ; "there is no danger from the water : see, *it* is subsiding rapidly. Had we waited a little longer, we might have gone dry-shod."

True, the water was fast receding—almost rushing from the part it had flooded ; and, *by* the time they reached the tree, the grass was bare, leaving the body of the negro lying exposed to the rays of the scorching sun ; and two or three Johnny-crows had settled just above it, on the stump of the mangrove-tree.

"Something has given way below, under the pressure of the water, Captain," said the Frenchman, in a hoarse whisper ; "if it is the path by the narrow gorge, we shall not be able to pass it without help."

"Possibly one of us could indeed, one of us must do it," replied Arthur. "We cannot leave tender women exposed to the scorching sun. They have gone through enough already."

"The sooner we get away from this the better, for it will not be long before they become aware of the presence of a corpse ; fortunately, the wreck of the tree is between them, and they cannot see it."

Rosalie had been more frightened during the awful spectacle than her companion, but the latter was terribly agitated and nervous—more from the effect of Arthur's words than in consequence of the earthquake.

Did he love her then ? Her very soul had drunk in his words. Half intoxicated with joy and wild delirious hope, she could not speak ; but a smile wreathed around her parted lips, and a look, at once expressive, tender, and conscious, beamed in her eyes, giving to her countenance, just now so pale and awe-struck, an expression so nearly beatific, that Rosalie, although she divined the cause, and longed to question her, forbore to interrupt that momentary rapture.

The young men, leading the horses to the

rock on which the two fair girls stood, assisted them to mount. This time Marguerite did not refuse Arthur's help. She trembled so much, that she could not have got on her horse without it. Our hero noticed it, but thought—naturally enough, that it was the effect of the earthquake.

Not until they were all mounted, and ready to leave the now desolated spot, did Rosalie notice the absence of the young slave, and she asked her cousin where he was ; to which François replied gravely :

“Do not ask me, dear Rosalie : let us leave this at once.”

“Oh ! *Mon Dieu !* he is killed then ; and this is all my fault. I insisted upon this ride and see the end of it. François ; this is very dreadful.”

“The end has not yet come,” murmured the Frenchman, turning his head away. Low as he spoke, Rosalie's quick ear caught what he said, and she turned upon him a look of inquiry ; but

he heeded her not, saying only : " Let us leave this."

The cavalcade set out on their return, Arthur leading the way, Marguerite next, then Rosalie, and, last of all, her cousin.

What they encountered on their way back to La Belle Etoile must be reserved to another chapter.

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ARTHUR CONWAY.

CHAPTER I.

ABOUT thirty yards above one of the sharpest bends of the gorge, a mass from the top of the cliff had become detached, and, falling on the path, had carried part of it completely away, leaving a chasm, full ten feet wide; rolling thence into the river's bed, it had, together with the broken pieces of dried earth formed a complete dam across the stream. The effect, however, was only temporary; for the increased pressure of the water from above soon carried away or dissolved the soil, and the stream

had forced a passage for itself between the fallen rock and the base of the cliff.

How to get the ladies and the horses over was the difficulty. The leap was not very great for a man or a trained hunter ; but their horses were utterly unaccustomed to jumping, and the ladies encumbered with their riding habits. There was no possibility of getting round the obstruction, as the cliff was nearly precipitous and the descent to the river's bed a sheer fall of from fifteen to twenty feet.

"If I can leap my horse across," thought Arthur, "the rest may follow like a flock of sheep ; and then we may devise some plan for getting the women over."

Without saying a word, he seated himself firmly in his saddle, and rushed his horse suddenly at the chasm.

Whether the horse was taken by surprise, or whether he knew that the safety of the party depended upon his exertions, it is impossible to say ; but he neither swerved nor hesitated—

rose gallantly at the leap, and cleared it in his stride; pulling up immediately of his own accord.

Marguerite, who was close behind Arthur when he set his horse in motion, did not faint or scream; but sat still as a statue, deadly pale, and with her eyes half-closed. The moment he had cleared the chasm safely, either unconscious of what she was doing, ignorant of the danger she run, or moved by one of those impulses so difficult to account for, before any one could say a word, she started off to follow him.

Rosalie uttered a fearful scream; but it was too late.

The horse made a gallant effort to clear the chasm, but jumped short; and fell partially forward on his knees and side.

Arthur heard Rosalie's scream, and turned round in his saddle just as Marguerite's horse was rising at the leap. He saw her danger in a moment, and threw himself off; and, as she fell on her horse's neck, he caught her by the

arms, and dragged, rather than lifted her, from the saddle. Fortunately, for a single moment the horse did not stir nor struggle; and she had time to disengage herself from the stirrups.

Scarcely had he drawn her light form away, when the horse endeavoured to recover himself; but his hind legs finding no support, and the soil breaking away from under him, owing to his fierce struggles, he fell gradually backwards and rolled down into the dark gully just below the rock that had dammed the water up. Arthur's horse, too, had disappeared. For a second time that day, Arthur held Marguerite in his arms. Events succeeding one another rapidly, seemed to be hurrying to a fulfilment the desire of Marguerite's heart. Months of conventional intercourse would not have produced the same effect on the wayward and blighted feelings of our hero. He inquired tenderly, in an anxious whisper, whether she was injured. Marguerite repaid him with a

sweet smile, and answered in the negative. Strange to say, with the exception of her habit, the skirts of which were torn in shreds, neither her limbs nor person had sustained any injury. Nor was she in the least frightened. The opportunity was not, however, one in which they could explain or give vent to their feelings and sensations, for they found themselves in a worse dilemma than before. The chasm was widened. The party was divided, for nothing would have induced the more timid creole to attempt the leap after Marguerite's fall. Two of the horses were gone, and two still to be got over. What was to be done?

- Arthur proposed that he should set off, on foot, and get a party of soldiers to build a temporary bridge across the chasm and bring horses out for the ladies to ride in on.

After some debate, this was agreed upon, as it seemed the only way to rescue them from their unpleasant situation.

François had no fear of the soldiers, as he

had not been one of those who tried to tam with their allegiance, and he had, for moment, forgotten the note he had sent up the Morne by the old negro ; but no sooner Arthur turned his back, than he remembered its contents, and how he had signed it ! It was by no means a pleasant reminiscence under the circumstances, but what could he do ? To leave his dearly-loved Rosalie and Marguerite also in such a situation, to take care of himself was impossible. He must trust to good luck—to chance. They might not get the letter to the young officer, or old Auguste might not have yet gone up to the Morne, might be in too great a hurry to read it there even if he got it ; but if he should, what could the young Englishman take ? would he arrest him as a spy ? No. He would think what was indeed partially true, that he must come over to see his cousin Rosalie, not to fight against the English. Fortunately, however, both of them, Arthur Conway had no chance

getting the note at present. Scarcely had our hero turned the sharp angle of the gorge when, to his great surprise, he perceived a man advancing towards him, leading his horse, with another following it close behind; and greater still was his astonishment when, on his near approach, he recognised the man who had paid him the nocturnal visit at his quarters.

His dress was certainly different, for the Carib now wore a coronet of feathers, but smaller and duller-coloured than the one which he had displayed at the assembly of conspirators. A tunic of striped cotton had taken the place of the feathered one; but a belt, covered with brilliant plumage, was round his waist, in which was stuck a light-handled axe. A short bow and a quiver, cased in shark skin, were slung at his back, the belt adorned with pieces of coral and red seeds passing across his breast and over his left shoulder. When he came up to the young officer, he said, looking suspiciously round:

“ English Captain must not know the Captain Baron—it is good.”

“ Why not ? ” inquired Arthur, inconsiderately.

The savage looked at him with a near approach to contempt on his face, but spoke as if he had not felt any.

“ The rocks have ears, whispers fly far in the open air. The Carib is silent.”

There is something in this man I do not quite understand, thought Arthur, but he is nevertheless welcome indeed ; then aloud : “ The path has broken down, and the maidens and the horses cannot cross it without a bridge ; will the Captain Baron assist us to get them across ? ”

The Carib nodded assent, and fastening the horses to some bushes, they left them. Before they came in sight of the party, the Carib told Arthur that he had been waiting at the ford below, when he saw a horse struggling in the gully ; that he had gone to its assistance and had succeeded in extricating it, the reins having

got entangled round its legs, and that the other horse had followed it on the path above, neighing, until it came to the ford, when it stopped and suffered itself to be caught. The horse that had fallen into the stream had received no material injury beyond a few scratches and bruises. Some accident he knew must have occurred, so he had come to give his assistance. As they came in view, the Carib once again whispered: "The Carib is a stranger to his brother—it is good."

Marguerite uttered a joyful cry when she saw Arthur approaching. She knew that he would not have returned without some good reason.

The Carib took no notice of her, but beckoning to Arthur to follow him he jumped lightly across the chasm, passing Rosalie and her cousin without speaking a word, but giving François a sign with his hand.

The young Frenchman astonished as he was at seeing the Captain Baron so unexpectedly, perceived at once that he did not wish to be

known. And he was thankful for it, inasmuch as had the Chief betrayed to the young English officer any previous knowledge of his person, it would or might give rise to unpleasant surmises in his mind as to his business in the island; for he firmly believed that all the Caribs, headed by this very man, would join the republican army on their landing, and would carry on a war to the knife against the English; this impression was still more deeply stamped on his mind by the fact that the news of the Caribs' rising at St. Vincent, where their numbers were still more formidable, was generally known at Dominica; still he was terribly puzzled. What had induced the Carib to follow them to the head of the valley? He could not have encountered them accidentally, for this was not the Carib country. True, it was the Carib and not an Obeah man who had warned him in the morning of the approaching convulsion of nature—a fact that he had naturally enough concealed from Arthur Conway; but would this

account for his presence? No, he could not for a moment suppose that the Carib had come all that distance to extricate them from a perilous position which he could know nothing about. It was in vain that Le Blanc puzzled his brain with ideas and surmises why he was there—and he was sufficiently acquainted with the character of the natives to be quite sure that it was of no use asking the Chief any questions. So, as many a wiser man has done before him, he simply resolved to make the best of it, and obeyed the sign the Carib had made him. Whispering to Rosalie that no doubt this man had some means of rescuing them from their awkward position, and parrying or not replying to her questions concerning the Carib, he started off after him.

Arthur who had lingered behind for a minute to re-assure Marguerite, joined him, and they went back together towards the waterfall.

There they found the Carib with his light axe busily hewing down the tall tapering bam-

boos; drawing them out as they fell one by one, and chopping off about six feet from the point of the slender stem; stripping the rest of the branches from the trunks which were about twenty feet in length, he left them bare. The thickest of these he split into four or five pieces. Then laying the bare poles in a row with the assistance of the young men who quickly caught his method, he interlaced and wattled the slender leafy tops, and the lengths he had split between the trunks, if we may so call them, of the bamboos, forming a kind of ingenious basket-work light but very strong. When this was done to his satisfaction, he went back to the chasm, and taking the bridles off the two horses he tied the reins together, and by jumping over with one end in his hand, leaving the other under a heavy stone, he found that they were long enough to reach across. By this simple method the temporary bridge, which in the meantime had been carried and dragged to the spot by the two young men, was hauled across the dreadful

leap. Then placing two or three of the heaviest splinters of rock he could lift on to the end of the bamboos, and removing the bridles, he ran lightly over the bridge. It bent a little beneath his weight, but bore him bravely over. Then Arthur passed over it eager to rejoin the still agitated Marguerite. Seeing the frail bridge bearing others so securely Rosalie no longer hesitated, and crossed it in her turn, the two young men steadying it at either end; then running up to Marguerite she threw herself into her arms. But in vain did Le Blanc and the Carib use all their endeavours to get the horses over, they seemed perfectly aware of the insecurity of the bridge; they snorted, reared and backed with staring eyes and gaping nostrils, while the foam fell in flakes from their mouths and a clammy sweat broke out over their bodies. They blindfolded them, it was of no avail. No sooner had their fore-feet touched the bamboos than they threw themselves on

their haunches, and obstinately refused to another step.

There was no alternative, the sun was high and his fierce rays shone broadly on the valley.

Rosalie's saddle was transferred to Arthur's horse. The trappings of the two were taken off and concealed amidst the brushwood, and the two horses were left to go free. The two horses trotted off immediately, and in a few minutes were feeding quietly on the fresh tops of the barberry near the lonely pool. There was no possibility of their straying, little chance of their being stolen. They had shade, food and water in the cool of the evening the young men would be able to send a strong party of men to repair the path and reclaim them. And what was a walk of some seven or eight miles to active young men?

As soon as Rosalie and Marguerite were on their saddles, Arthur and the young Frenchman simultaneously turned round to thank the

—but he was gone. Slowly and with far different feelings to those which had stirred their hearts in the grey morning, the party wended its way back to the ford at Roseau.

Rosalie could not forgive herself for having insisted on the ride—the death of the young slave haunted her. Marguerite was terribly agitated by the events of the day, and the sensations awakened in her bosom by Arthur's form and Arthur's words. His spirit too was troubled, for the re-action was great after such stirring scenes, and his conscience asked him had he done right? He had gone too far to retract, but did he love this fair girl as she ought to be loved? Of the whole four the young Frenchman's mind was the most tranquil, simply because in his nature there was more *sang froid*, although he knew full well that within a few hours he must part with Rosalie, perhaps for ever. For ever! It is a fearful sound! It has an awful meaning! Even in this transient world to part for ever! To see

no more—to hear no more the thing we love! **! !**
 Ay, beyond this, to hope no more that we shall **!!**
 interchange communion with what we love! **! !**
 This is to part for ever! Yet in his mind, that **3t**
 for ever could not enter. Death alone, that **3t**
 awful certainty killing hope, might plant it there. **-e.**
 His nature could not comprehend despair, **e7,**
 and yet his hope went not beyond the grave.

The events of the day had been of such a **8a**
 nature that the two young men felt now as if they **2y**
 had long known each other; and, as Arthur **ur**
 had not the slightest idea that the lively French- **-t**
 man was a dangerous enemy, he pressed him to **o**
 make use of his services as long as he should **E**
 remain on the island. François, in return, **-**
 would have opened his heart to our hero, and
 appealed to his chivalry, had he not been sen-
 sible that by so doing he would compromise
 Arthur. We are not, however, quite sure that
 he would have been quite so scrupulous about
 it, had he not felt tolerably certain that old
 Auguste Pierrot would deliver the note safely.

The party found no other serious obstacle to their progress. There were a few fissures and rents in the earth certainly, and in several places the path had been partially broken away; here and there, too, fragments of rock were lying scattered about, fresh shining places in the face of the cliffs showing from whence they had been detached.

Some of the out-buildings of the mill had been destroyed, and one or two of the negro huts had fallen in like a house of cards, built by children.

As they approached Roseau, the marks were less evident, showing that the shock had been a local one. The vein of it had probably passed along the centre and uninhabited part of the island, leaving the sea line comparatively uninjured. All the negroes, however, that they encountered, seemed in a terrific fright; and one old man, of whom they inquired whether he had felt it, answered, pale and trembling: "Ees, Massa; him shakee, shakee too much. Ole

negro man berry, berry sick ; pose him sh again, he die." And now the party separate, for the ford is reached. As Ar took Marguerite's little trembling hand in to bid her good-bye, Rosalie and her co turned away. He pressed it tenderly and ki it ; and, still holding it, he whispered so " Dearest Marguerite, to-morrow." Then, a deep sigh, in which love and sorrow bore e portions, he moved slowly away, shaking h with Rosalie and François as he passed. lively creole gave him an appealing—an in ring look, which he read rightly, and answ by one word—" To-morrow."

CHAPTER II.

We will now suppose the three arrived at La Belle Etoile. Old Devrien had become nervous at their non-appearance. He had felt the shock, and knew the dangers they would be exposed to at the waterfall; so, when they did arrive, the old man fell on Rosalie's neck, and wept aloud; then he kissed Marguerite and François, and danced round, until he fell exhausted into an easy chair. The slaves too, one and all, crowded round her, kissing her feet and the hem of her garment, crying with joy.

At La Belle Etoile, at least, Rosalie was a

queen—a queen beloved—not feared. François the republican, saw this, and it made a lasting impression on his mind. He loved Rosalie; therefore he could see nothing degrading—nothing humiliating—in the actions of the slaves he would have done it himself. Yet she was of the class he wished to annihilate—nay, he had taken an oath to do so. He saw how an aristocrat could be loved—nay, almost worshipped by beings whom his creed declared were his equals; and he was to lose, for a time at least even if ever Rosalie should recal her words, this being so bright, so beautiful, so beloved, for his creed!

Poor Marguerite, happy at heart, but fatigued and agitated, soon retired to her apartment, and Rosalie followed her. Shall we profane this maiden sanctuary with our unhallowed presence? For a moment we must.

Scarcely had Marguerite removed her torrid riding-habit, and, sitting at her toilette table, was arranging her golden hair, thinking that she

looked very pale and dejected, when she perceived a note lying there. She took it up, marvelling what it could be. The direction was to her, and in a man's handwriting. It was not her uncle's. Whose could it be? Not Arthur's, surely! What made her think it could be his? foolish girl; had he not just left them? Had Marguerite been more worldly, she might never have read it; but her heart suspected no guile. She broke the seal. The words were fairly written, in a clerk-like hand. As she read on, she appeared to be fascinated, and her eyes were riveted on the paper. Let us look over her shoulder, and read them too:

"You are young, Margaret Gordon, you are artless, and know nothing of the world—beware of the snares of the ungodly man. Behold this picture, and let your mind study it. Be warned. Two persons in this island can vouch for its truth. A noble mansion stands amidst stately oak-trees in the warm west. The mottled deer are resting under their shade. The park slopes

away to a silver trout-stream ; blue hills in the distance. There is a maiden standing by an open window. The sun-rays fall on her vestresses. Her eyes are beaming with love and pleasure. See, she has a letter in her hand which she raises to her lips and kisses—she reads the post-mark—it is Dominica ! she opens it—what ineffable joy suffuses her face and sparkles in her eyes as she peruses the glowing sentence—news from her beloved—has this maiden betrayed ? Look again at the shadowy valley ; a lofty mountain ; a stream springing from its side. A deep, cool pool shaded by feathery bamboos ; a solitary mangrove-tree. The earth shakes, the mountains bow their heads, the rocks tumble down. A fair-haired maiden rests in the arms of a young and handsome cavalier. She is listening to his honeyed words. She believes for she believes them. Yet this maiden has been betrayed. Can one man love two maidens ? Ask him of the noble oaks, the leaping

stream, the distant hills ; he will answer. But of the maiden he has betrayed he will not speak to the maiden he is betraying. But whisper softly in his ear, for he alone must hear it, the magic name of the absent one, and behold the result. Whisper it gently as the summer breeze sighing amidst the aspens. It is a sweet name, and the maiden is worthy of it, for she is passing fair. It is Edith, Edith, Edith ; remember, Edith !”

There was no signature and no date.

As Marguerite read this extraordinary letter, her cheeks grew paler and paler, her breathing became fainter and fainter, her eyes closed gradually, and she sank back in her chair, senseless and inanimate, with the letter still clutched in her little hand.

Her reason had whispered the truth. He loved some fair young girl in England.

In a short time, Rosalie entered, and, to her surprise and dismay, she found that Marguerite

had fainted away. She strove to restore her to consciousness but in vain. A terrible feeling stole, with an icy coldness, over her heart, that Marguerite was dead. Ah! no,—her heart beats, and she breathes gently, though her eyes are still closed. Rosalie rang for assistance, and a young female slave soon appeared. She started back in terror, screaming: "*Oh, mon Dieu ! elle est morte !*"

"Hush, Fanfan!" said Rosalie, gently, "she is not dead, but sleeps. Come and help me to undress her."

The young slave, a handsome, dark quadroon, approached timidly and tremblingly, and assisted Rosalie to undress the pale, unconscious maiden; lifting her gently, they placed her in her snowy bed, and as they were undressing her, the letter, unperceived by them, fell on the floor.

Rosalie watched for some time by the bedside, hoping that Marguerite would recover her

senses, but her eyes remained shut, and a low moaning, murmuring sound issued from her half-closed lips.

The creole became alarmed as she perceived that this was no common fainting fit; and leaving Fanfan to watch, she hastened to her own room and wrote a note summoning the only physician then practising at Roseau, and despatched it by a slave on horseback, bidding him ride for life and death—no unpleasant order to a negro, and one likely to be obeyed. She would have written to Arthur, requesting the attendance of the surgeon of the troops, but she felt that it would be alarming him terribly, perhaps unnecessarily. Then, without informing her father or her cousin François of the calamity that had befallen her sweet friend, her adopted sister, she returned to Marguerite's chamber. It might be in the end but a passing faintness, and she would not render her cousin's departure more sad with any unpleasant tidings.

With all her coquetry, Rosalie had a kind and feeling heart.

There was some relief to know that Marguerite breathed, for while there is life there is hope. Yet she began to grow restless, and to mutter incoherent words, and a flush passed over her cheeks.

"My poor little Maggie has caught the fever; and no wonder, after what she had gone through to-day," murmured Rosalie, as she went to the arm-chair to draw it near the bed. "But what is this, I wonder?—a letter! and directed to Miss Margaret Gordon! Has this anything to do with her sudden illness? What can it be? Is her kind uncle dead, or ill? Whose writing is it? Let me see—no signature! an anonymous letter to Marguerite! There can be no harm, then, in my reading it—nay, I must, for her sake. There is some mystery, which this may reveal!"

She did read it—over and over again. Her

mind did not grasp its contents so readily as poor Marguerite's had, for her heart was already fixed; but the force and apparent reality of the picture drawn in the letter, gradually revealed its meaning to her. If true, alas for Marguerite! Now her sudden illness was accounted for. Some one must have been watching them at the waterfall—the native! No, it could not be. Some one else must have been there. Rosalie's character, unlike that of creoles in general, was energetic. She was mistress of La Belle Etoile, not only in name, but in fact. Her rule was gentle, but she reigned supreme. Now, all her energies—all her vigilance—all her self-possession—all her art must be called into play in behalf of her friend, whom she indeed loved as a sister. All this time she had stood holding the fatal letter in her hand, confused and horrified, but as the first shock passed away, like the earthquake's crash, she sat down by the bedside and began to arrange her thoughts. Then, perhaps, for the first time, she felt how happy a

thing it is to be accustomed to think and act for oneself. The first thing to be ascertained was how and when the letter had been delivered at La Belle Etoile. Rosalie beckoned to the quadroon to come near her, and speaking in a whisper, she said :

"Do you know, Fanfan, who brought this letter to Miss Gordon?"

"Yes, Ma'mselle; I put it on her table myself."

"But who gave it you, Fanfan?"

"A town-nigger, Ma'mselle."

"How do you know where he came from?"

"I was standing in the sun, Ma'mselle, warming myself, for I was very cold from the fright the shakee shakee gave me, when a nigger rode up on a mule. He stopped, and said: 'How you do, Misse? You very pretty gal!' —impudent fellow!"

"Never mind, Fanfan, what he said about you."

"*Eh bien!* Ma'mselle. I asked de nigger if

de shakee shakee had been very bad at Roseau, and he said : ' Yes.' So you see, Ma'mselle, he did come from town. Den he asked me if I belonged to La Belle Etoile, and said he had a letter for Ma'mselle Gordon. So I say : ' Give it to me.' "

" And he gave it to you?" said Rosalie, interrupting her, aware of the slave's natural prolixity of speech.

" Yes, Ma'mselle. Den I asked him who gave it? De nigger laugh, and said : ' Dat secret ; but I get two dallar, for bring it.' "

" Should you know him again, Fanfan?"

" I tink not, Ma'mselle. All dose niggers so ugly—so much alike ; but I tink I should know de mule again. White, what you call *étoile*, all down his face."

Rosalie remembered she had met a negro, riding a mule with a white blaze, in the tamarind grove, near the ford, so she asked :

" How long ago was this, Fanfan?"

" 'Bout half an hour, Ma'mselle."

"That will do, Fanfan ; but, mind, you must say nothing about this note to any one. ~~Mim~~ this, Fanfan, and I will give you a new bright scarlet bandana."

The quadroon slave thanked her mistress, and withdrew to a corner of the room, where she squatted down in silence.

So far, Rosalie had learned scarcely anything but it immediately occurred to her that the man who had helped them across the chasm must have been the person who had been watching them at the waterfall. They had been delayed a long time there—more than two hours ; there was, then, plenty of time for a man to have ridden, or even walked, into Roseau, then to have written the letter, which had probably been previously in part prepared, and before they arrived at La Belle Etoile the messenger might have been there, and back again to Roseau.

To find out the native, or whatever he might be, must be her first object.

At that moment there was a slight knock at the door, and Rosalie, with a light step, quitted the bedside, and opened it. Old Pompey was there, with a message from François, saying :

“That if Mademoiselle Devrien was dressed, he would be much obliged for a few minutes’ conversation with her before his departure.”

Rosalie went back to the bed. Marguerite had not stirred. She was loath to leave her friend, even for a short time ; but she could not let François go without bidding him farewell. She felt that she might never see him again. She wished, moreover, to ask him some questions, hoping to gain some information concerning the man who had helped them to cross the chasm, although she had not made up her mind to show him the letter. Bidding the quadroon take her place by the bed, and desiring her to come to her immediately, should Marguerite move, she went to her own boudoir, taking the letter with her, and told old Pompey to let

her cousin know that she was ready to see him.

It was a charming little apartment. The floor and panels of the wall were of highly-polished satin-wood ; the window-curtains, tastefully festooned, were of pale, rose-coloured satin, deeply fringed with lace, and the cushions of the sofa and the chairs were of the same hue and material. A small ebony table, quaintly inlaid with ivory, was strewn with books and elegant *bijouterie*, and in one corner there stood a small *Prie Dieu*, with a richly-carved figure of the crucified Saviour. The *bénitier* was a cup of the purest agate, and a splendidly illuminated missal lay open beneath the crucifix. The room was closely jalousied, the curtains were drawn, diffusing a roseate colour over everything, and a vase filled with lime-blossoms scattered around a delicious fragrance. Had it not been for the presence of the emblems of her religion, the whole would have presented an

appearance of luxury too voluptuous. Yet it was truly emblematical of the mind of its lovely owner, who, now reclining on the sofa in her Spanish dress, awaited the appearance of her lover. He was about to leave her, and her heart was softened towards him.

"Come, dear François," she said tenderly to him as he entered, "come and sit by me—we are going to part soon. I forgive you all your imprudence; but why, oh why, will you leave us?"

The young Frenchman sat down on the sofa by her side, and, twining his arm gently round her waist, he looked softly into her eyes and murmured: "Thanks, dearest Rosalie, thanks for this. Your father is asleep in his hammock, I have taken leave of him, although I did not tell him where I was going."

"Your resolution is still unshaken then, and you despise my love."

"Say not so, dearest. Alas! I now confess that I am truly miserable, Rosalie; but I am

pledged, deeply pledged—honour, good faith—nay more, my oath are in pawn. O, Rosalie you would not ask me to break them all?”

“ Promise me at least, dear François, that you will quit the service of the Republic when you have redeemed your present pledge. Go now; but go with them no more after this. I tell you they are unholy, accursed, and cannot last.”

“ Be it so, Rosalie; but *it* is for you and for you only that I make the sacrifice. If I promise to break with them, will you now plight me your troth?”

“ Nay, this is ungenerous—”

“ Not so, sweetest. Must I break asunder all my bright visions of liberty, of glory to enter again into the chrysalis state? Must the finger of scorn be pointed at me? Behold, say they, the votary of liberty, whose voice was loud, whose ambition was soaring, with his wings clipped like a tame eagle chained by the leg. Ay, worse, they will hiss in my ear ‘ Rene-

gade! traitor! aristocrat!' And think you this is a trifle to a heart beating wildly as mine does? And will not she for whom alone I shall have made this sacrifice reward me? What remains then but death? This day has conquered me, Rosalie: will you not pity your victim?" There was a lofty passion in his words, as if they rushed from the depth of his heart, gradually subsiding into sadness as he concluded. They were too much for the already half-vanquished Rosalie.

"Nay then, dearest, if it will pleasure you," she said, softly, "I promise by all that I hold sacred that I will be yours whensoever you shall come to claim me."

François heard no more, for he drew her towards him and stopped her mouth with a long, sweet lingering kiss.

"And now, dear François, you must listen to me," said Rosalie gravely, when the world again opened to them: "now that I am your betrothed, I must place my confidence in your

hands. Let us be serious. A fearful eve has happened since I saw you. I fear my sweet friend, Marguerite, is dying."

"*Mon Dieu*, how terrible! How has this happened? She was quite well after her ride. Are you quite sure she is so ill?"

"I have already sent into Roseau for a doctor, and, until he comes, I cannot tell the extent of our misfortune. I had not intended to tell you of this; but now I am glad I have, for you must help me to unriddle the mystery."

"There is a mystery, then?"

"Yes, dear François: read this letter carefully, and then tell me what you think of it."

François took the letter, and, as Rosalie had done, he read it over and over again, for not having seen the direction, he, for the moment, fancied that it was meant for Rosalie, and, consequently, was dreadfully puzzled. At last, he said, with a strange perplexity on his countenance, which caused a smile to wreath itself round his mistress's lips:

"I cannot make it out at all; there is no sense in it. What do I know of old oaks and a stately mansion, with a lovely girl peeping out of a window?"

"How stupid you are, dear François; do you not understand it is to Marguerite, not to me, that the letter is written?"

"*Sacristie!* I understand it well enough now. It alters the case very much. Poor, poor girl! her illness is now accounted for."

"Now tell me what *you* think of it?"

"Stop! I must read it once more. Ah, I see; this young officer has one love in England and another in Dominica—not a rare or extraordinary occurrence that!"

"But you have not told me your opinion of this letter. How tiresome you are."

"Well, Rosalie, this Captain Conway is either an unprincipled villain, or a most unfortunate man. Aha! now, it strikes me, I have heard something of this before. Not only one, there are two, it seems, already, and this makes

jesting matter."

"Now, Rosalie, just look what you have done by consenting to be my bet perhaps, if our little scene had not taken place you would not have shown me this. Come, give me a sweet kiss, Rosalie, for show you how well I shall deserve it. I have told you all, you will give me not over twenty."

"I will not refuse them, dear Frank, you can throw any light on this mystery. Rosalie yielded herself to his embrace."

"Rosalie, I love that young Englishman although he is my enemy. I would not be wronged, although I would meet him face to face."

young Englishman's degradation, through you—through you, my Rosalie; failing in that, he has tried this new infernal scheme. This is my advice, dearest: as soon as I am gone, write directly to Captain Conway, urgently, but coldly, requesting his presence here. He will come. Show him this letter yourself, Rosalie, and ask him to tell you his history. If he is a man of honour and a gentleman—both of which I believe him to be—he will consent. Depend upon it, there is something sad and mysterious about it. Let there be no subterfuges—no delicacy—no delay; ask him boldly, and ask him at once. That over, tell him from me—mind, Rosalie, from me, for he may repay me fourfold—that he has a hidden, bitter, implacable enemy present in Dominica, who corresponds with some one in England. He goes by the name of Marinier, and he is a Jesuit. More I know not: but—forewarned, forearmed. Tell him, moreover, that the man who helped

us at the waterfall was the Chief of the
He knows something of this Marinier."

Rosalie's ears greedily drank in her words, and her heart was inexpressibly li
There was a deep pause, as if someth
struck them both.

"How mysterious are the ways o
dence," said Rosalie, solemnly. "B
few minutes ago I had no hope for pe
guerite; and now, because my proud I
relented towards thee, dearest—and t
in part bowed down thy wild, untamed
He has been pleased that hope shou
dawn upon us. François, dearest
wilt thou still call this chance? fatality
thou not pray to thy God? Wilt t
ere we part, bow thy knee to thy
Redeemer? Behold him there! (
çois! grant me but this, and I shall i
happy."

"I—I do not know how to pray," n

François, subdued, conquered, in spite of himself.

"Come then, and I will teach thee;" and, taking her lover's hand, Rosalie led him, unresisting, to the crucifix, and, kneeling together side by side on the *Prie Dieu*, they poured forth their hearts in humble prayer and adoration to the crucified Redeemer.

Such is the power of love!

"It is not safe for me to stay any longer, dearest," said François, sadly; "and I am keeping you from Marguerite. Go, my own Rosalie, and cherish her. Be unto her what you have this day been unto me—a ministering angel. Trust me, I shall never forget our parting. One kiss, and so farewell."

"Go, François, you are right to go; though I would keep you in these arms for ever. But, oh! dearest, do not forget that there is a God. Let not liberty and reason efface religion. Remember when you knelt to your Redeemer with your Rosalie. She will ever pray for you;

FRANÇOIS LEFT LA BENE ETOILE SECRET
had resumed the dress he wore when
introduced to the reader, and had repl
whiskers, beard, and moustache. F
the track by which he and Jack Dive
he had quite forgotten, had come to l
Etoile, he arrived, without adventure
Maison vide.

It was completely deserted. Multi
bright-eyed lizards were basking on t
or scuttling about the verandahs. A la
du chien glided from beneath the do
A bloated *crapaud* hopped slowly ac
path, and an *agouti* rustled through the
while myriads of white ants, working
their covered way, were busily scooping

It had never occurred to Le Blanc that the Carib might play him false. He was not there, however; and the sun was tinting the mountains with rays of gold.

Le Blanc was getting rather nervous, when, by the track that led amidst the tangled brush-wood towards the sea, he perceived an arrow balanced on a forked stick, with the head pointed towards the ocean. He examined it carefully, and found that it was tipped with copper, and feathered with the quill of a seamew's wing. The Carib had been there.

He knocked, however, once more at the door, but the only answer was the sound reverberating through the lonely passages. A land-crab clattered away, and the nasty cockroaches ran scampering off.

He was gone, then, and this was the method he had adopted of pointing out the direction. Le Blanc was to follow. Le Blanc, taking the arrow with him, proceeded along the track

At the creek by the mangrove shaded stream where he had landed from the Sally, he could at first see nothing; but presently three forms started up suddenly from amongst the tangle-weeds and advanced towards him. They had bows and a quiver of arrows on their backs, but their hands were empty.

"Ha, I thought Le Baron would not fail me," said François; "but why are his brethren here?"

"The Chief cannot go with his brother in the piragua. La Perouse and Il Duque will paddle him safely over the waves to the Northern Island. Does the French Chief wish anything of the Carib?"

"Does not Le Baron love the English officer who leaped his horse over the chasm, where the waters fall into the deep pool?"

"The French Chief speaks the truth—why should Le Baron lie?"

"Wherefore, then, was Le Baron watching with Marinier behind a rock?"

The Carib replied, indignantly: "Le Baron was not with Marinier. He was alone, for he feared treachery. He loves the English Captain. The Carib's ears are keen. His arrows fly far and true. He went up the valley of the rain-bows because Marinier went before him."

"Le Baron is a great Chief—his ears hear far—his eyes can see the eagle on the lofty mountain-top. If he would do the French Chief a service he will watch Marinier and the mulatto, Lemantin, and he will tell the English Captain what he hears and sees."

"It is well," replied the Carib. "Le Baron loves both his brothers."

Then motioning to the two Caribs they lifted the piragua from among the castor-oil plants, and launched it in the stream, placing in it a porous jar of water, some sweet limes and shaddocks, a loaf of bread and a large broiled fish, covering the whole with damped fern leaves.

François taking a kindly leave of Le Baron crept in, and they paddled silently down the stream.

The Carib waved his hand, and turned away towards the mountains.

CHAPTER III.

THE physician of Roseau was unfortunately absent in the country when the negro slave arrived with Rosalie's note. But understanding that it was a pressing case, his wife opened it, and adding a few lines of her own, she sent the slave up to the Morne to inquire for the surgeon of Arthur's detachment.

The surgeon happened to be in Arthur's quarters when an orderly brought him the note, and he opened and read it there. When he had finished it, he said to our hero: "This is extra-professional, Conway; but I suppose there

can be no harm in my going a little distance into the country to see a fair patient who has been suddenly taken dangerously ill."

"None in the least, my good fellow," replied Arthur, carelessly. "Thank God, your services are not much required here at present. I am rather busy, and somewhat tired with my ride, or I would go with you."

"By the bye, Conway, have you any idea where La Belle Etoile is? what a Frenchified name."

"What!" almost screamed Arthur, "what did you say?"

"Read it, my good fellow, and satisfy yourself."

Arthur almost snatched the note from the surgeon's hand, while a horrible idea of some impending evil made the perspiration stand on his brow and the characters of the writing dance before his eyes. "Take it back," he said hoarsely, "and read it to me, I cannot; my eyes swim, and my brain reels."

The surgeon, not understanding his emotion

and attributing it probably to the effect of the sun on Arthur, read it aloud; it was couched thus :

"My dear Sir,

"I am sorry to inform you, that Miss Gordon has been taken suddenly ill, and, I fear, dangerously so; if you can make it convenient, I should feel much obliged by your coming out to La Belle Etoile without delay,

"Ever yours,

"ROSALIE DEVRIEN."

"To Dr. Gray,

"Physician, Roseau.

"As my husband will not be at home before night, I have sent the messenger on with this, as it appears serious.—S. G."

"Oh, God! another blow—one more such, and it is finished," murmured Arthur. "Surely this world to me is but a vast desert; every

green thing I see fades from me like a mirage —
the water I would drink turns to sand."

"Why, what's the matter, Conway, y—
must have caught the fever."

"Dallas, I ride with you."

"Certainly not—I will not allow it—go —
bed, you are heated and fatigued with yo—
ride. It would be insanity for you to go o—
again in your present state."

"Dallas, I am not mad—did you know a—
you would pity me. Go with you I must an—
will—it would kill me to stay."

"More likely to do so if you go out in th
sun again," replied the surgeon, with a shrug
"At all events, lie down and take some rest—
I cannot go for an hour or more."

"For God's sake, go at once, Dallas! Sh
may die! There is more in this than you
imagine," said Arthur, vehemently excited.

"If you will promise me to lie down for an
hour," repeated the surgeon, taking out his
watch, "I will order horses to be saddled."

"If I lie down and sleep, you will go without me."

"No, no. I see you have some secret interest in these people, and I will not deceive you; I will come and call you. But, mark, I will not be answerable for the consequences. You are in a high fever already, and this is no climate to trifle with. Good bye, for the present," and the surgeon left the room.

"Ay, a fever of the mind," murmured Arthur, throwing himself on a sofa. "Am I then, for ever fated to be unhappy in my love—am I like the deadly upas, destined to blight everything that comes near me? Why had I not strength of mind to resist the temptations of this fatal day? Ah, my sweet Marguerite! why were you so simple, so artless, so open? why did you not wear a mask, like other women? Why, oh! why did you raise hopes in this blighted heart, that death might dash them down? In thy love, the gloom of my soul might have become light. Is it to end in utter

darkness? am I mad? not yet—not yet! But should Marguerite die!”

He shuddered at the thought, and groaned aloud. It was terrible to see the workings of his over-heated, over-wrought imagination. The idea that Marguerite was to die, had suddenly fixed itself in his mind. It was sad to see this young man, in other things so firm of purpose, so high-minded, so courageous, conjuring up an awful phantasy of death—picturing to himself, as a certainty, what might be, but as yet, was not—despairing when there was still hope—desponding, yet excited almost to madness. Then, as he lay, groaning in spirit, a terrible shadow was cast upon the awful picture. Instead of one, there were two forms, one distinct and visible, the other filmy, shadowy, unsubstantial—Marguerite and Edith—the past and the present. Edith and Marguerite. Fever was in his veins, though he heeded it not. Rising from his couch, he filled a tumbler-full of wine, and drank it off. For the moment, it

steadied his nerves. He took out his watch. Half an hour had not passed away, though it had seemed to him half a day.

Will he never come?

A knock at the door! Is it Dallas?—no, it is an orderly.

"A note for you, Sir," said the soldier, respectfully touching his cap.

"Is she dead?" said Arthur, in a hollow voice.

"No, Sir, thank you; she is as well as can be expected," replied the soldier, thinking that his captain was inquiring after his wife, who had lately been in an interesting situation.

"Shall I leave the note, Sir?"

"Did you not say she was dead?" repeated Arthur, mechanically holding out his hand for the note.

"God forbid! your honour. Shall I wait, Sir?"

"What for?"

"The letter, Sir. There may be an answer. The messenger is waiting."

"Go!"

The soldier saluted his captain gravely, ~~went~~ to the right-about, and marched out of ~~the~~ room.

Tom Ellam was standing in the shade of a mangoe-tree, near the bottom of the steps of the creeper-covered porch, waiting to see his young master.

"I say, Tom," said the orderly, "what's ~~the~~ matter with the Captain? I think he has been turning his little finger up. I never seed him this way afore."

"No, Jack; you're wrong. Master never drinks."

"Then, as sure as a gun, he's got the fever. Why, he seemed quite put out, like, that my ~~old~~ woman hadn't died in her confinement."

"Nonsense, Jack. Master is in one of his low fits. He didn't mean your missus at all. I know better than that. But I suppose I had better not go in now, though I wanted to see him about those Frenchers we trapped so nicely."

"Wait a moment, Tom ; I seed the surgeon leave the Captain's quarters, a bit ago. He went over to the hospital to fetch sommat, I suppose. Wait till he comes back again. There's Yellow Jack abroad."

"Devil doubt it!" replied Tom. "That sailor captain—Gentleman John, as they call him, on board the 'Sally'—is nicely in for it. What the deuce could have brought him into the company of such vermin? I heard he was to have dined with the Captain at the mess to-night ; instead of that, we find him sick of fever, in a dirty hammock, swung in the old tumble-down house where we snared the Frenchers, with a white-headed nigger as hospital orderly. I hear he is to be brought up to our hospital."

"What will they do with the Frenchers, Tom?"

"Hang them, to be sure."

"Won't they try 'em first?"

"No. Hang them first, and try them by a

court-martial afterwards—that's the dodge. It's no time, this, for levity. I say, Jack, what asses they were to think that money would make us desert our colours. Mounseer caught hold of a slippery eel when he picked out Tom Connolly."

"He's a knowing chap, that Fighting Tom. He took their drink, pocketed their rhino, and limed them into the bargain."

And the two soldiers laughed loudly and merrily at the idea.

"Who is that laughing out there?" said an almost sepulchral voice from Arthur's quarters.

"It is I—Tom Ellam, Sir," said the soldier running up the steps; "did you call, Sir?"

"Run over to the hospital and tell Mr. Dallas I cannot wait—stop—is the your horse fit to ride?"

"He is scarcely off his physic, yet, Sir."

"Never mind—put a saddle on him directly and bring him round—do you hear?"

"Yes, Sir, but——"

"Do as I order you, Sir, without delay."

Tom Ellam retreated quite amazed at Arthur's imperious manner; it was so unusual, so unlike his young master; he had, however, nothing to do but to obey, but as he descended the steps, two at a time, he said to the orderly, who was still lingering there: "I say, Jack, there's a good fellow, just run over to the hospital and tell Mr. Dallas that the Captain is in a mortal hurry, and that there is a screw loose."

"Mum's the word—I understand you, Tom," and the orderly hastened across the savannah to the hospital, while Tom Ellam went to the stable muttering to himself.

Rosalie's first note had agitated and alarmed Arthur, but her second one completely overthrew all his reasoning powers. When the orderly left him he had opened it, and, by the assistance of another glass of wine, he had managed to read it. All, however, that he

could comprehend by her words was, the simple fact, that Marguerite was dying, and that she wished to see him once more before they parted for ever.

In Rosalie's note, which was cold and formal there was no such meaning, it simply requested his presence at La Belle Etoile, as soon as he could find it convenient, as she had something of importance to communicate; but the idea had fixed itself so completely in his mind, that he could think of nothing else.

The orderly found the surgeon at the hospital, and gave him the message as if from the Captain, but, at the same time, he ventured to hint something about Yellow Jack.

Dallas, pocketing his case of instruments, those horrid symbols of suffering, sent for his horse and rode over to Arthur's quarters.

In the meantime, our hero had been stalking up and down his room like a troubled spirit, muttering to himself—"Will he never come? It will be too late, too late, too late!" He heard

the sound of the horse's feet even on the soft grass of the savannah, and ran out, bareheaded, to see what it was. Dallas was on horseback with an umbrella over his head.

"Go in and get something on your head, Conway," said the surgeon, laughing; "one *coup de soleil* is enough in a day."

Our hero rushed back into his quarters for a hat, inexpressibly provoked at the surgeon's sneering laugh as he thought it. When he came out again, Ellam had brought his horse round. He mounted, and drove his spurs into the horse's sides. It plunged and reared and then started off at full gallop.

"Stop!" cried Dallas, "I'm not in such a hurry, I shall take it easy."

Arthur heeded or heard him not, but continued his frightful speed down the steep declivity, twisting his horse like magic round the sharp angles of the zigzag road. Along the grassy level, skirting the town of the ford, through the deep sand of the tamarind-shaded

track, he dashed madly on, never, for one moment, thinking of his companion, pursued by the one absorbing idea that Marguerite would be dead before he could reach La Belle Etoile. How he got there he never knew. His horse flaked with foam, in a white lather, with heaving flanks, open nostrils, and quivering tail, its sides all bloody, its fetlocks cut by the sharp rocks, was standing with distended legs and neck outstretched trying to catch its wind when Rosalie, whose quick ears had heard its approach, left Marguerite's room hastily, to meet as she expected, the doctor. Arthur Conway: exhausted, half-fainting, haggard, splashed from head to foot, was leaning against a post of the verandah. When he saw Rosalie, his sense seemed to return, and taking her hand, with his frame trembling with nervous excitement he looked wistfully in her face and said, in a low plaintive voice: "Is she dead—for mercy's sake tell me,—have I come too late?"

Rosalie saw his distress, and her woman's

heart pitied him. So she said quickly : "No, thank God, she lives, and there is hope—pray come in, Captain Conway, and rest yourself."

"O, speak those blessed words again—tell me once more she is not dead."

"With God's blessing she will recover ; but I beseech you do come in—you are exhausted, and I fear ill."

"Did she ask for me? O let me see her if only for a moment, that I may be convinced of the reality."

Rosalie could not hesitate any longer to believe that Arthur loved her adopted sister, his unexpected presence, his manner, his words confirmed it. His distress was so palpable, so expressive of love, so real, that all suspicion of his good faith vanished into air. It cannot have been my note, she thought, that has brought him here, poor fellow, so soon : some one must have told him of Marguerite's illness—his distress will be doubled if I refuse his

request. Alas, she will not know him. It cannot surely be wrong.

"Follow me," she said softly; "but do not speak and make no noise, for she sleeps."

Arthur crept on tiptoe behind the fair creature, whose light step was scarcely audible, his heart throbbing so painfully that she could hear it beat.

She pushed the door of Marguerite's chamber gently open, and looked in.

"Come," she whispered to Arthur, "come, but only for a moment."

Marguerite's fair face was pale as alabaster— you could see the tracery of the blue veins in her marble brow. Her eyes were closed, the long, dark silky lashes resting on her cheeks. Her golden hair, released from its confinement, lay in loose disordered tresses on the snowy pillow, her sweet lips now of a soft pale coral colour were partly open, her small pearly teeth fast clenched. The same low moaning sound still came forth from her breast; but the heav-

ing of her bosom caused the coverlet to rise and fall rapidly. One little hand, white as the driven snow-wreath, rested on her bosom as if to keep down its tumultuous heavings, the other lay twined in her golden tresses. The outline of her figure, so graceful and so rounded, was distinctly visible through the light covering of the bed. But Arthur saw it not. He was only conscious that she was not dead—that she still breathed. He sank on his knees by the bed-side and prayed. He would have remained so for hours had not Rosalie, who had been watching him with the deepest interest, awoke him from his trance-like devotion, saying :

“Go now, my dear friend, I will come to you shortly.” Then beckoning to the quadroon, she bade her show our hero to her own little boudoir. He rose and followed her like a child.

The act of prayer had calmed him—he was no longer the wild incoherent being he had been but a few minutes before. A softened melancholy, blended with a faint glimmering of

hope, gently and almost unconsciously displaced the terrible ideas that had mocked his reason. The fever of body and mind had subsided, and he languid and depressed, with a sad but not desponding heart, he sank upon the sofa in Rossie's boudoir. It was not to be wondered at that he should be somewhat impatient for the fair creole to rejoin him, but some time elapsed before she came.

Dallas had arrived, but not until nearly an hour after Arthur, having been obliged to ask his way. He pronounced Marguerite's illness to be a case of island fever—not highly dangerous, but requiring much quiet care and attention. The extreme beauty of her face and figure struck him forcibly, and he was no longer at a loss to account for what he had thought insanity in our hero. Nor did the rich luxuriant loveliness and queen-like manners of the dark-eyed creole escape his notice. The elegance and neatness of everything about the house surprized and charmed him; and when

Rosalie took him down to her own boudoir to write his prescription he was perfectly bewildered, for he seemed transported to a fairy palace; and he afterwards confessed that, had he not seen it with his own eyes, he never would have believed that two such women, and such a house, could exist in Dominica.

As Rosalie left them for a moment to themselves, he said to Arthur, who had sat up as they came in and was trying to collect his thoughts :

"Don't be unhappy, my dear Conway: it is but a common case of fever, which she will soon get over."

"Thank you, Dallas," replied Arthur, gratefully squeezing the surgeon's hand. "Now you understand my madness."

"We cannot afford to lose you just at present, so take care of yourself, Conway," replied the surgeon. "Take my advice, if you are sufficiently at home here to ask for a bed, you will stay. I shall ride out with Doctor

Gray early in the morning, if I can manage and you can return with us. Shall I send your traps out?"

"Thank you, Dallas, for your advice; it suits my inclination, and I think I shall follow it."

"Do, my dear fellow. I can assure you I have already begun to feel a deep interest in the people of this house; no wonder, then, that you are anxious."

Arthur did stay: not only that evening, but the next day, and the next, for Rosalie met the surgeon as he was going away, and he told her frankly that he was afraid Arthur would be seized with fever, if she did not detain him quietly at La Belle Etoile, as the excitement of mind and body had been very great and both would be heightened if he rode back without rest.

Dallas returned alone.

We must pass over rapidly and briefly the rest of that evening. Rosalie, finding Arthur willing to stay, ordered a room to be got ready

for him, and postponed until the following morning all questions concerning the anonymous letter. Explaining briefly to her father the fact and nature of Marguerite's illness, without giving any reason or surmises as to what had caused it; but, at the same time, hinting as to the probability of Arthur's attachment to her friend to account for his presence, she left them to dine *tête-à-tête*.

They both drank pretty freely; and with the wine old Devrien became very communicative. The conversation naturally turned upon the events of the day, the earthquake, and so to François. The old man said, in reply to a question from Arthur:

"I don't know where that young scamp has gone to, nor what he is about. Peste! though he is no nephew of mine, as people generally suppose him to be, I love him as a son. Indeed, one day, if he will but grow steady, I mean to make him so, if Rosalie will have him. But, *sacristie!* she has a will of her own."

"Is he not your nephew? I thought I heard Mademoiselle Devrien call him her cousin."

"Not a bit of it! My poor brother François left him and his mother to my care. He is a foundling, but I dare swear he is of gentle blood. By the bye, was not your mother's name De la Motte?"

"Yes," replied Arthur, stammering, with his face all flushed and burning; "yes, that was her maiden name. I am called after her, Arthur de la Motte."

"*Tonnerre de Dieu!* this is strange enough. Why I have heard my brother François say a thousand times that this youngster's linen, when he was left crying at his door, was marked with F. or E. de la Motte, and when he adopted him, he called him François de la Motte Devrien. Your mother was of noble birth, and a charming woman. I remember her, with bright golden hair like Marguerite's, before she disappeared with your father from Paris."

The dark cloud was whirling round Arthur's brain, but the old man did not see the storm he was raising, nor the bitter anguish expressed in our hero's countenance.

"Ah! I remember well what a sensation it created, for I was in Paris at the time. Her father was a harsh man, and a ruined gamester; he wanted her to marry a *roué* marquis, to pay a gambling debt, but she would not have him; and he, I suppose in spite, turned priest, or Jesuit—I forget which. In course of time, it transpired that her father had given her the choice of wedding this man, or of being shut up for life in a convent; but she being a determined young woman, and a Huguenot to boot, preferred a living, handsome young Englishman to the mortification of perpetual seclusion."

At first every word pierced Arthur's heart with a scorpion-sting, but gradually a faint, indistinct light glimmered in his mind that his host might know something of his mother's marriage. He was afraid—ashamed to ask.

Yet, Marguerite ! Edith ! Morley ! what was there not in the question ?—but then the reply !

“ I do not know my poor mother’s history well,” he said, mournfully. “ She could never bear to speak of that time. I have often, as a boy, pressed her to tell me, but her tears and agony prevented her. When she fled from this terrible persecution, did she marry my father — directly ?”

“ Who ever doubted that she did, young man ? I, myself, after some years, heard that she had married Mr. Conway, and was living with him in England, and that she had given him a son.”

“ Ah ! if I could but prove it !” thought Arthur, “ for Marguerite’s sake !” But he said no more.

It may seem strange that our hero did not question the old man further regarding François Devrien, but it must be remembered that his mental energies were prostrated—his senses

were still in a confused whirl. Excitement and dejection succeeding one another rapidly, had given his nervous system a shock from which it would take days to recover. Independently of the bodily fatigue he had undergone during that day, hope and fear, love and despair, had alternately raised and depressed his spirits to such a degree, that no one can be astonished that he found himself utterly unable to keep up the conversation with the kind, but garrulous old man.

He asked permission to retire.

As he was going to his chamber, Rosalie slipped out from Marguerite's room, and bade him good night, comforting him with the assurance that her charge was better.

Our hero felt and appreciated the delicate kindness of the lovely creole.

CHAPTER IV.

THE eventful day had now concluded, and we have accounted for most of the principal *dramatis personæ* of our tale who have acted in it.

Something, however, remains to be told, before we draw the curtain for the night. First, how the Carib came to be at the head of the Valley of the Shadow of Death. Secondly, how Tom Ellam and Fighting Tom Connolly trapped the two French conspirators, Le Bar and Petun.

It may be remembered that the Carib was

present during part of the conversation between Le Blanc and Marinier, in the house where the two conspirators lived. He listened attentively to all they said, although apparently occupied with his pipe : he could not understand all their words, but his keen senses gathered some of their meaning, particularly in regard to our hero. His instinctive passion of hate, revealed to him that Marinier was an enemy to his friend, the English Captain ; and, in his mind, there were but two feelings, friendship and enmity. Marinier was plotting against his friend, therefore the Carib was Marinier's enemy.

He had been hovering about the house ever since the conspirators had returned from La Maison Vide, unwilling for a moment to lose sight of his intended victim. His hearing the conversation then was purely accidental, and, had it not been for the mention of Conway's rank and description of person, his ears would have remained closed, and his senses buried in apathy.

It was not, however, until he had been satisfied by Le Blanc, and by personal observation, that the fly had not strength to break through the mesh he had woven for him, that he went up to the Morne to see our hero, telling Le Blanc that he was going to the mountains.

His own nature prompted him to watch Marinier—he had therefore returned to the dilapidated house very early in the morning and there he had warned Le Blanc of the coming earthquake, and asked him where he was going.

Le Blanc was sleeping at the time, and told the Chief without hesitation of their intended visit to the waterfall.

Le Baron departed abruptly, taking with him his bow, a quiver full of arrows, and a light-handled axe, and preceding the young Frenchman to the ford, he concealed himself near it, amidst the shrubs that nearly filled a cleft in the rock.

He saw the party arrive, one by one, and set out on their ride up the valley: scarcely had

they left the spot, when a man, mounted on a fine mule, crossed the river and followed them. Notwithstanding his disguise, the Carib easily recognised Marinier. He immediately suspected treachery, and keeping a little behind, he walked after them, watching every motion of the Jesuit. He saw him ride up to the young negro slave, and heard them speaking, though he could not catch what they said. At the second ford, above the mill, where Arthur and Marguerite had stopped to let their horses drink, he saw Marinier pass them. His bow was strung in an instant, and from behind a rock, close to the stream, he took deliberate aim at the Jesuit. Marinier passed on, and the arrow never left the bow. Again, when Marinier drew up his mule against the face of the cliff to look at Marguerite, the Carib was very near. The slightest hostile movement on the part of the Jesuit, and the arrow would have sped on its course. The lovers started off in a canter, and Marinier was left behind, but he rode steadily

on: when they crossed the river below the gorge, he got off his mule, and fastened it to the shrubs. Then he crept on with stealthy pace along the narrow path, and concealed himself behind a rock, not twenty yards from the old mangrove-tree, but close behind him was Le Baron. When the earth began to tremble, Marinier, narrowly escaping the falling rock, which had destroyed the track, rushed back down the dangerous path to secure his mule, and mounting it, he rode back towards Roseau. The Carib, as soon as the shock had ceased, left his concealment and followed him for a short distance; but seeing that he was really returning towards the town, he determined to wait until Arthur should pass on his way back. The events related in a former chapter then took place. We must now follow Marinier. When the Jesuit had again crossed the ford near the town, and was riding along the turf by the river's bank, an old negro started suddenly out from behind a broken wall.

and came towards him. It was old Auguste Pierrot. He drew Marinier behind the wall.

“ O wurra, wurra, Massa,” he said, wringing his old bony hands. “ Tap, tap, Massa Marinier, our house all full of buckra sodgers. O, wurra, wurra, dat ole Pierrot should lib to see dis day.”

“ Ha ! has some one turned traitor, Auguste?”

“ Ole Pierrot no sabe but dat true, in dey come, bayonets fixed—surrender in de name ob de King. Le Bar fire pistol one, two—bang, bang. One sodger fall down, but de rest all rush togedder at Le Bar. Knock him down. Petun gib himself up ; den day put chains on dere hands and begin searchee, searchee all ober de house—take um papers all dey find.”

“ And how did you escape, Auguste?” inquired the Jesuit.

“ Wen dey find de sailor man in leetle room, one sodger say, Hein Sailor Captain what he do here ? den dey see me, and I told em, me here to wait on sick sailor berry bad fever, den one

sodger say, pose him put de darbies too on ole nigger; but Serjeant say no. Poor old brute—he callee me brute—is only hospittle-orderly, nebber mind him; so dey march away with de two citizens and leab me with sick man.”

“But you said that there were still soldiers there.”

“Ees, Massa; by-em-by Corporal wid tree men come back—dey ask me wedder one Marinier lib dere; and if ole nigger know where he be? Pierrot no tell—him sabe noting bout citizen Marinier, ha, ha!”

“Who has told the soldiers about me?—who has betrayed us? Can it be Le Blanc, or his friend the native? Let me reflect. No, it must have been my own cursed folly! These drunken soldiers must have been too cunning for me, or that hot-headed Le Bar has been making a fool of himself. I must try something fresh.”

“Ole Pierrot tink Le Blanc is de traider.”

"Why do you imagine such an improbability?"

"'Cause him give Pierrot a letter to take up to de Marne for buckra officer."

"Did you do it, Auguste?"

"No, Massa Marinier, ole Pierrot too 'cute for dat."

"What have you done with the letter? Let me see it."

"Ole Pierrot burned it," replied the nigger, with a cunning grin.

"But you have not told me how you got away."

"Dat berry easy; buckra sodgers take berry leetle notice of old nigger, as dey call me; dey let old Pierrot go fetch med'cine for sick sailor."

"And you came and hid yourself here to warn me?"

"Ees, Massa Marinier, you clebber man, you nebber tell ole Pierrot him monkey, him ole fool, like citoyen Le Blanc."

"It would be dangerous for me to go back into Roseau at present; what do you think I had

better do, Auguste?" replied Marinier, not that he thought the negro could help him, but to humour his pride. It had, however, without his being at first aware of it, an unexpected effect on old Pierrot.

"Keep in de shadow of the walls, or dey will see us. Aha, dat will do. Now, Massa Marinier, listen to what ole Pierrot say. Him got plenty of dallar when he teachee de niggers to dance. He buy house and bit of ground for his son—he be free man, same as his fader—and marry free woman too, berry ansome mulatto gal, de house 'crass de river 'bout tree four mile, leetle way up the hiles; here him grow yams, patetes, plantains, plenty of vegetables; sell 'em in Roseau—'pose citizen Marinier go to dat house with old Pierrot—him berry safe, and plenty welcome."

Marinier mused for some moments.

"Thank you, Auguste. I think it is the best thing I can do for the present. Can I write a letter there?"

"Ob course, Massa! You not pose dat ole

Pierrot and his son like common niggers, heh ! plenty of pen and ink, plenty books too. Jesuit priest teach ole Pierrot read and write—him got grand eddication, not like nigger slave, who yam and sleep all de day when no workee.”

“ Shall I find any one there to send the letter by—he can ride the mule ? ”

“ Ees, Massa, plenty.”

“ Then I will go with you and claim your son’s hospitality for a short time—can you walk so far, or will you get on the mule, and let me go on foot ? ”

“ Dat not do—negro man ride, buckra gentleman go on foot—no—no,” said the old man, deeply gratified, however, with the offer, “ plenty of life in ole Pierrot yet—see.”

And the wizened old negro began to caper and dance about.

“ Let us lose no time, then.”

They crossed the ford, and went for several miles in the direction of La Belle Etoile ; the

old negro stepping along like a young man, and keeping pace with the mule. Leaving the path by the sea-beach suddenly, he led the way along a dry watercourse, and up a steep, winding track, amidst prickly pears and cactus plants; then through a piece of wilderness where the path seemed lost amidst the luxuriant undergrowth of weeds, which, notwithstanding the thick foliage of the branches overhead, flourished in wonderful profusion and variety to a cleared spot of about an acre. The house stood in the centre of a hollow, and was shaded by a few fine silk, cotton-trees. Patches of Indian-corn, sugar-canes, yams and sweet potatoes, divided by rows of plantain-trees, were planted on three sides. On the fourth side was the well, with a hedge of Barbadoes pride screening the whole from a broken ravine that ran between the plantation and the shrub-covered cliff which overhung the sea-beach. Cocks and hens were strutting about, feasting on the myriads of insects, and two or three

handsome guinea-birds ran screaming through the long grass. A pig came grunting out, and a dog barked as they approached.

Our space will not permit us to relate the introduction of Marinier to the inhabitants of this snug little plantation: suffice it to say, that he was hospitably received by its inmates, who were, indeed, of a superior description to negroes in general. Madame Pierrot might once have been handsome, but age had long since defaced all traces of it, for in that race, beauty vanishes with extreme youth. Pen and ink there was as the old dancing-master had boasted, and Marinier, drawing a half-written letter from his pocket, sat down and finished it; and mounting one of the sons, a tall negro of twenty, who had just come out from Roseau before them, upon his mule, he despatched the letter to its destination, and requested the bearer to ride afterwards into Roseau, to return the mule to a certain direction, which he gave him.

The effect of that letter has been already seen ; Marinier slept in his new domicile, nor did he leave it for some time afterwards. And now having seen him safely lodged for the night, we must, for a brief period, return to Roseau to relate how the gamekeeper of Morley, and Fighting Tom Connolly snared the Frenchmen.

The two dressing themselves in smock-frocks with foraging caps on their heads, started off, early in the morning, for Roseau, leaving word, with the sergeant of the guard, where they were to be found when he should send the picquet out to search for them. One of the men, who had been at the public-house when Marinier had bribed Tom Connolly, was to accompany the non-commissioned officer in charge of the picquet, whose fire-locks were to be loaded in case of any resistance. Martial-law was then in force over the whole island, and there was no need to apply to the civil power for assistance or authority to search for traitors.

The two soldiers had the precaution to take their bayonets with them concealed under their frocks, for they did not exactly know with whom they would have to deal.

The grog-shop was situated in a narrow street that led to the Market-place, the end of it being nearly opposite to the mouth of the lane, at the bottom of which, looking out upon the sea, stood the dilapidated house occupied by the conspirators.

All along the narrow street, and on both sides, were several low public-houses, or spirit-stores. Indeed, every fifth house bore some strange name, who declared himself ready to sell spirits by retail.

The two soldiers entered the 'Blue Anchor' stealthily, as if they did not wish to be noticed, and, calling for the host, they ordered some breakfast, an unusual occurrence, and one likely to lead to questions from their entertainer. The host was a man of some notoriety, having been a sailor—some said a pirate—in his youth. He

had now established himself nominally as a publican, but in reality as a crimp. Nothing, however, by which he could turn a penny—honest or otherwise—came amiss to Amos Jones. He was not a negro, but he could hardly be called a white man, for his face was of all colours, red predominating, particularly at the tip of his nose. His cheeks were furrowed with small-pox, he had but one eye, and wore a tow wig. Once upon a time, he had been a tall man, but his right leg having been broken—he said, in action; report, in a drunken fit—the sinew had contracted, and an iron prop sustained his weight instead of his proper walking implement. The other, or perfect limb, had gradually bowed itself out, to accommodate itself to the length of the iron, which had originally been made too short. His arms, chest, and shoulders were of great size and power, and he stumped about on his iron pin with surprising activity. No one knew whence he came, nor to what nation or creed he belonged. If he were not a Jew, he

certainly was no Christian. He ate pork, and despised religious mummery, as he called it. True, he worshipped Mammon in the form of dollars and bits, and offered in return for his favour gritty coffee, yams, raw rum, and a villainous compound that he called Hollands, which, with lodging, he furnished to every runaway sailor on the look-out for another ship, at his own price.

Amos Jones came stumping out of his den, leering suspiciously at the two soldiers with his one eye.

"I say, old chap," said Fighting Tom, who was spokesman; "can you give us some breakfast?"

"Eh—what? Breakfast, did you say? Why do such fellows as you come to the 'Blue Anchor' for breakfast—eh?"

"Mona mi dhaouil! Get out of that, with your questions, and give us some coffee at onst, for we're in a mortal hurry," said Fighting Tom.

"No offence, my fine fellows—I meant no offence; but it does look strange to see two soldiers out at this time of the morning, wanting their breakfasts."

"We are going to take a little walk in the country—that's all," chimed in Ellam, "and want something to eat before we start."

"Leg-bail! French leave! Eh?" replied the ogre, with a wink of his one eye.

"Not exactly," replied the gamekeeper, with a knowing look at Fighting Tom. "We are only going to look for a little, oldish Frenchman we met here a day or two back, to get a little money from him, if we can earn it."

"Ah! they don't pay you well up there, then?"

"Blood and turf! they don't give us enough to buy bacca with," interrupted Fighting Tom.

"Who's to pay for your breakfast, then? It's against the rules of the house to go on tick."

"Sarve you right, you stingy old omadhawn, if we went to another kip," said Connolly, putting his hand into his pocket, and pulling out several loose dollars.

Amos Jones's one eye twinkled with delight when he heard the chink of the coin, but he was still suspicious. He wanted to know how a private soldier came by so much money, so he asked Tom where he got the dollars.

"They don't grow on the trees, honey, though there's plenty more where these came from."

"My comrade means that they are French dollars," said Ellam. "They're not drawn from the chest. The truth is," he added, confidentially, "we are on the look-out for a new master, and want to see the little Frenchman to help us to one; and, if you will put us in the way of it, and give us some breakfast, we don't mind standing a dollar or so."

"Let's finger them first, my boy—that's what I call doing business."

"Here, you greedy cratur!" said Connolly,

pretending to be indignant, but pitching a couple of dollars to the host, who caught them in the air; "give us a bit to eat, and a morning."

Amos Jones was dignified. Could a man of his consequence condescend to get breakfast for private soldiers? Not he. But, sticking his hands into his capacious breeches pockets, and jingling the dollars, he called out: "Here, you black scoundrel, King George, fry some pork and yams, and look slippy, or I'll skin you."

"Yes, Massa Amos," replied a squeaking voice inside, "but dare no pork, no plantain; cockwaches yam all up."

"What do you mean, you young nigger? I'll cowhide you white, if I don't may I never handle a dollar again!" screamed the host, stumping off into the kitchen, apparently in an awful rage.

The soldiers exchanged a knowing wink, and the gamekeeper whispered to Fighting Tom: "Depend upon it he'll send for him; I only hope it will be the right one."

Tom Ellam was not wrong in his conjecture.

Amos Jones had an eye to business. Marinier and Le Bar had already paid him handsomely for the use of his room, when they had on previous occasions gone there to see what good they could do with the soldiers. Besides, he had a great contempt for all existing authorities, if they did not pay him.

“Scuttle off, you young nigger, over the way, to the house at the end of the lane, and tell the Frenchmen that there are two soldiers at the ‘Blue Anchor,’ waiting to see them.”

King George started off, as if the devil had kicked him, glad to escape without a cuff, or a blow on the shins.

Amos then taking down from a shelf a jar of Hollands, went back to the soldiers, and filling three tin tots with the deleterious compound, handed one to each of the soldiers, reserving the third for himself, and saying he had sent the slave for some yams, invited them to take a morning.

Had Marinier been in the house, he would

probably have proceeded with more caution. But Le Bar was hot-headed and headstrong, and he obeyed, without suspicion, the summons he had received from Amos Jones.

The host received him at the door, and whispered to him, in bad French: "It's all right, Mounseer, there's two lobsters inside, ready for a start your way."

Tom Ellam looked under his eyelids carefully at Le Bar. He knew at once it was not the man he wanted. Le Bar was tall, had grey eyes, and light hair, with reddish whiskers; his man was short, thin, black-eyed, dark-haired, and had no whiskers.

While breakfast was getting ready, Le Bar seated himself by the soldiers, and entered into conversation with them, as if he had casually dropped in. He could speak broken English sufficiently to make himself understood, and after a little sparring and manœuvring on both sides, the soldiers let out that they were going to desert. Le Bar hinted that they might as

well join the Republicans, and enforced his argument by slipping an eight-dollar piece into each of the soldiers' hands, promising them promotion and double pay. Connolly seemed to demur to the terms, and Ellam began to reason with him upon it, saying that they could not go back now. The Irishman turned his head away, and flattened his nose against the dirty glass of the small window that looked out upon the street, as if sulky, muttering that Tom Ellam was making a bad bargain.

"Breakfast's ready, gentlemen," said Amos, with a grin. The Frenchman had put half-a-joe into his hand as he came in, and the feel of the gold had rendered him polite.

"By Jabers! there's the picquet coming down the street," cried Tom at the window.

"They're looking for us," replied the game-keeper, in alarm.

"They're searching the grog-shops," continued Connolly; "they've stopped at one at the top of the street. What shall we do?"

"I shall bolt, and take my chance."

"Ay, you'll get off cheap enough, you've a good character; but the halberds and five hundred for me, if I'm cotched. I say, Amos, can't you hide a chap somewhere snug?"

"What will you stand? there's a law against harbouring deserters—the penalty's heavy."

"Damn you for a stingy old cripple," replied Tom.

"They've come out of one public and are going into the next. There's no one outside: I'm off, Tom—take care of yourself;" and Ellam bolted from the 'Blue Anchor,' down the street, round the corner of the Market-place—but there he stopped.

"I won't budge an inch, and I'll split if I'm taken," said Connolly, sulkily.

"Come, my fine fellow, and I'll hide you," said Le Bar. "Amos, lend me that old panama and a coat—and here's another half joe."

They put a straw hat on Connolly's head and a sailor's frock outside his own, and, taking

him by the arm, the Frenchman walked quietly out of the 'Blue Anchor' just as the picquet of soldiers entered another public-house. They crossed the Market-place without attracting notice, and walking rapidly down the narrow lane, Le Bar pushed a door open, and, telling Tom Connolly to follow, he went up stairs to the room where Le Blanc had slept the night before. Petun was sitting at the table outlining in ink a map, or plan, in which were sketched all the defences and weak points of the island, with remarks at the foot as to the number of men, and what guns were mounted in the garrison.

"Is that you at last, Marinier?" he said, without looking up. "Come and look at this, and tell me if it will do for Victor."

"It is I, Le Bar, come back with a friend, Petun—a promising recruit too. There were two of them, but one bird was shy, he flew off at the sight of a red coat, so I think we have got the best of the brace."

Petun looked up from his work, surveying Fighting Tom from head to foot, with a grim smile. Connolly met his eye steadily, not a muscle of his countenance moved.

"You have been very rash," said Petun, in a savage tone, addressing Le Bar. "Look at that man, I tell you he is a traitor."

"Traitor to your teeth, you French black-guard," replied Tom, boldly.

Petun drew a pistol out, cocked it, and pointed at Tom Connolly's head. He did not flinch, but said coolly:

"Be asy now with your arms. Is this the way you shake hands with your friends? I'm Tipperary, and don't care a traneeen for the likes of you—see that now."

"You're a bold man to venture here unarmed, and by yourself. From this house you never stir, except feet foremost, without you take the oath."

"That's just what I want, your honour," said the Irishman, simply. "I'm used to that

sort of thing in Tipperary, and I'll kiss the crass whenever your honour likes."

"Bring out the flag and the box, Le Bar, and let the Irishman see the cross he has to kiss."

"They will soon be here," thought Connolly, "and I may as well humour the thieves of the world, and see all their dodges, the jokers."

Le Bar opened a small closet in one corner of the room, and took from it a square mahogany box, and a silk flag.

"Is that the book I'm to kiss?" said Tom, with great simplicity. "If your honour will mark it with a crass, I've no objections, as I'm a good Catholic."

"Wait, fool!" thundered Petun, touching the spring, and disclosing the guillotine, and again pointing his pistol at the Irishman.

"Shure your honour's joking with me," said Connolly, neither flinching nor even winking an eye. "What is that now? Will you just tell a poor boy what it means?"

"The scoundrel is laughing at us!" said Petun, in French, to Le Bar. "Touch the spring again."

The knife fell as before, and the head of the figure rolled off, and the red fluid spirted out.

"So perish all traitors!" said the two Frenchmen, solemnly.

"Amen!" replied Tom.

Le Bar now drew a pistol also from his breast, and both of them held the muzzles pointed at the Irishman across the table.

"Swear or die!" cried Petun, hoarsely.

"Swear or die!" echoed Le Bar.

"It's a mighty purty toy, gentlemen, and the little man's head 's cut off very nately. So your honours, I'm ready to swear."

"Lay your hand, then, on the box, and repeat the oath after me," said Petun. "I swear by the guillotine—"

"By the holies! that"—said Tom, interrupting him, for he thought he heard the sound of a

measured tread, like that of soldiers,—“that’s a queer thing to swear by, anyhow!”

A loud knocking was now heard below, and the sound of a door burst open.

“Treachery!” cried Le Bar.

“Oh, where will I hide myself!” said Tom, suddenly, upsetting the table and dodging behind it just as Le Bar pulled the trigger. The bullet scattered in fragments the figure of Liberty, but the silk flag and the table stopped its further course.

Petun, who was in heart a coward, sank down helpless and trembling on a chair, and the pistol fell from his hand.

The soldiers, guided by the report of fire-arms, rushed up stairs, and in a minute the room was filled with armed men.

“Surrender, all of you, in the King’s name: down with your arms!” cried the sergeant in command.

Le Bar had snatched up the fallen pistol. Without reflecting, he pointed it at the door,

and, as the soldiers entered, he pulled the trigger. One of the soldiers fell badly wounded. Then the party rushed on Le Bar and Petun and secured them, handling them not over-gently.

Tom Connolly crept out from under the table, with a ludicrous expression on his face, and picking up the damaged box, he set it on its bottom, and apostrophized it thus :

“Blessed Mary, look at this ! What would Father Corrigan have said, if iver I went back to ould Ireland, and confessed that I, Tom Connolly, of Boriesoleagh, a true Catholic, had purjured myself on a box with a knife in it, widout the ghost of a crass cut on it. ‘By the bite and the rock of Cashel,’ he’d say, ‘I was desaving him.’ So this is what they call the guillotine ! Well, Tom Connolly, you’re the first boy has been saved by it, anyhow. Glory be to God.”

And Fighting Tom crossed himself gravely. The soldiers, as old Pierrot had told Marinier,

then searched the house from top to bottom, carrying off everything they could find of a suspicious nature.

Jack Diver, in a state of high fever, was discovered in the little room with the old negro, crouched under the hammock. Some of the men who had come out from England in the 'Sally,' recognised the sailor, though they could not account for his being in such company. Seeing he was unable to move, they left him in old Pierrot's care for further instructions; and taking their two prisoners with them, they left the house, at the door of which a considerable crowd had already collected. Tom Ellam was outside, waiting to see the prisoners: he looked at them attentively, neither of them was his man. He went back to the house with Tom Connolly and a corporal, and questioned old Pierrot; but in vain—there was no trace of Marinier. Just at this time, the earth began to quake, and they ran out into the Market-place, without thinking anything more of the old

negro. Earthquakes have a wonderful effect on the reflecting powers.

As Le Bar and Petun will not appear again in this story, it may be as well to mention what became of them—they were tried, convicted, and hanged.

CHAPTER V.

DALLAS and Doctor Gray rode out early in the morning to see Marguerite: they found her a little better, though still unconscious of anything that was passing around her. Arthur had not risen from his couch. A note was left for him, briefly relating the capture of Le Bar and Petun, and requesting his instructions as to what was to be done with the Master of the transport. Our hero had only heard of the arrest of the conspirators, not of how their capture was effected. Rosalie's note and the surgeon's summons having completely effaced it

from his mind. The two men returned to Roseau.

After breakfast, Rosalie begged the favour of a few minutes' conversation with Arthur, in her own little boudoir. He went there with a palpitating heart. As this conversation tends materially to the development of this story, we must give some of it in detail.

After many questions and replies concerning Marguerite, in which our hero's anxiety and eagerness to hear the slightest detail betrayed his love, and Rosalie's comforting assurances and her sympathy, the fair creole said :

"Do not think me rude, or inquisitive, Captain Conway, if I ask you some questions. I am aware they may seem impertinent ; but for Marguerite's sake, and your own, my dear friend, if you will allow me to call you so, they must be put."

"My kindest friend," replied Arthur, taking her hand, "after what you did for me last night, do you think I could refuse you anything?"

"Do not be too confident. Alas! I fear I must inflict some pain—perhaps open afresh a wound scarce healed over."

"Rosalie, I am prepared. The events of yesterday I feel have changed my nature. My folly has been revealed to me. My weakness, my apathy—nay more, my guilt—in the visions of the night, all, all declared themselves. Rosalie, I love the sweet Marguerite; but I am not worthy of her love."

"I rejoice to hear you say so, for Marguerite's sake, poor girl; she would die if she doubted it."

"Die! Yes, that is it, die! and I the cause. O, God! forgive me."

"You mistake me, I fear, my dear friend. I said, that if you did not love Marguerite, she would die. But you do love her, and she will live to bless that love."

"Can you doubt it, Rosalie? But oh, that terrible day-dream!" said Conway, with bitter anguish, pressing his hands against his forehead, to still the throbbing of his temples.

Rosalie looked at him with tears in her eyes = and pity in her heart. The intention of the = letter was to wither an already-blighted heart. — She saw it, she read it in his agony. Yet she = thought that she had a duty to perform.

“Can you bear it now, my dear friend?” = she said, in a sweet, low voice, “or shall I] postpone it until your strength is recovered] from the shock of yesterday?”

“Say on,” replied Arthur, moodily, “nothing now can give me pain.” And he looked so sad, so woe-begone, that Rosalie’s heart had nearly failed her, but she remembered Marguerite and her lover’s parting injunction; sooner or later the truth must be known, or Marguerite would die. She rose, unlocked a desk, and took out a folded paper. Arthur watched her with intense curiosity, yet with anguish in his heart.

She sat down again by his side, trembling and fearfully nervous; she had a duty to perform, painful and perplexing to her kind and feeling heart. No one to guide her now—

nothing to assist her in her delicate task ;
nothing to lull the storm she might raise ;
nothing to strengthen her woman's heart, but
her love for Marguerite, and a conscience void
of offence. She began to read the letter,
omitting the first part.

"A noble mansion stands amidst stately
oak-trees in the warm West. The mottled
deer are resting under their shade. The park
slopes away to a silver trout-stream—blue hills
rise in the distance."

"That is Morley Hall !" exclaimed Arthur,
almost unconsciously. Rosalie continued to
read, without apparently noticing his exclamation.

"There is a maiden standing at an open
window. The sun rays fall on her waving
tresses—her eyes are beaming with love and
pleasure. See, she has a letter in her hand,
which she raises to her lips and kisses. Let us
read the post mark—it is Dominica. She
opens it."

"Yet I have never written," he muttered, gloomily. Rosalie looked at him with increased curiosity, his senses were apparently entirely abstracted, yet he was commenting on the letter. She went on.

"A shadowy valley. A lofty mountain—a silver stream springing forth from its side. A deep, silent pool. A vast, solitary mangrove-tree. The earth shakes. The mountains bow their heads. The rocks thunder down. A fair-haired maiden rests in the arms of a young and handsome cavalier. She is listening to his honeyed words. She is happy, for she believes them."

"The waterfall! The earthquake! Marguerite!" he said, musingly.

Rosalie shuddered, the worst was yet to come, but she read on.

"Yet this maiden also is betrayed. Can one man love two maidens? Ask him of the noble oaks, the leaping trout-stream, he will answer; but of the maiden he has betrayed he will not

speak to the maiden he is betraying. But **whisper** the name of the absent one softly in **his** ear, and behold the result. It is a sweet **name**, and the maiden is worthy of it. It is **Edith!**"

"**Edith!**" he cried, in bitter agonized accents, **starting** up wildly from his sofa ; "**who** speaks **of** **Edith?**" Then, sinking down again, he **murmured**, in a broken voice, "**Who** speaks of **Edith?** I loved her once, but she forsook me ! **Who** speaks of **Edith?** Is she dead ?"

Rosalie fairly wept—the mystery was fully revealed.

There was silence for a few moments : Arthur passed his hand across his eyes.

"What is this that you are reading to me?" he said, sadly, like one awakening from a fearful dream. "**Who** is it that recalls scenes to this wretched heart, that were better for ever forgotten ? tell me, my sweet friend."

"It is a letter to Marguerite Gordon."

"To Marguerite ! and she has read it ! My

God, it will kill her! Who has done this?" he added, in a fierce voice, again starting up wildly. "I will tear his heart out—the snake-like, treacherous villain. Who is he? tell me, Rosalie."

"Calm yourself, my dear friend; indeed know not who he is, there is no signature to the letter."

"Yet are the pictures to the life," he said slowly, again sitting down. "It is a masterpiece, drawn from nature by a skilful hand—Morley—Edith—the valley—Marguerite. Let me reflect. Tell me, my kind friend, how came this letter here?"

Rosalie told him briefly how she had found Marguerite in a fainting fit, with the letter lying open upon the floor, near her chair; how, partly out of curiosity, but more to ascertain if it had anything to do with Marguerite's sudden and unaccountable illness, she had looked into it; and how, finding no signature, she had thought it right to read it through. How she had consulted her cousin François (here Rosalie

blushed deeply), and the advice he had given her. How, after he had gone, she had written to him requesting his presence at La Belle Etoile, though she had not meant to bring him out so soon; and how, finding that he was distressed, fatigued and ill, she had not spoken to him on the subject on the evening before, but had reserved it until his strength was more recovered, and his senses calmer.

“ But you have not told me how this letter came here, Rosalie. Did you make any inquiry as to who brought it ?”

“ Yes, my dear friend, I did : believe me, I felt for you deeply, not only for poor Marguerite’s sake, but for your own. I did not wish to alarm my dear father, so I questioned Marguerite’s maid myself. It appears that the letter was brought by a negro, who rode out from Roscau on a mule : she took it from him, and placed it on her mistress’s dressing-table.

“ Did she ask him from whom it came ?”

“ She did ; but he only laughed and paid her

some compliment—you could not expect poor Fanfan to reflect."

"Whoever it is, he must have known me in England, yes, and been present at the waterfall when the rock fell down," said Arthur, musingly, for the cloud had passed away.

"Have you no enemy, my dear friend? Is there not some subtle, but venomous, serpent who wishes to sting you silently and secretly?"

"No, Rosalie: I have injured no one, why should I have a hidden enemy?"

"Know you any one called Marinier?"

"Marinier—Marinier! Ay, the Carib mentioned such a name; and, now I think of it, the faithful Tom Ellam warned me that one bearing that name was trying to seduce the soldiers, and making strange inquiries about me. From his description, Ellam, who was formerly a gamekeeper at Morley, thought that he had once seen him there. Ah! I remember it all now. Where have my senses been?"

"Was the Carib, who told you of this Mari-

nier a chief?" inquired Rosalie, who had been listening very attentively to his somewhat incoherent speech.

"Yes, he told me so. He is called the Captain Baron. It was he who helped us across the chasm."

"Then, Captain Conway, depend upon it, the Carib must have been the man who was watching us."

"Could not he himself have described the scene to some one?"

"It was my cousin François who told me this," said Rosalie, with a blush, not answering his question. "I showed him the letter, and he left a message for you, bidding me be sure and give it you from him, for he said you would be able to repay him fourfold, and I am confident he is right, and the Carib has nothing to do with it."

"Your cousin! Must I call him so?"

"Yes—yes; pray do!"

"Your cousin, then, knows this Carib Chief?"

"I believe so," said Rosalie, hesitatingly, and she began to feel that she might be getting into a scrape. "Let me give you his message, as near as I can remember it. He said you had a bitter implacable (yes, that was his word), implacable enemy in Dominica, who writes letters to some one in England. His name—or the name he is known by—is Marinier—a Jesuit, I think I said; and the Carib knows something about his whereabouts." Then she added, hastily: "I must leave you for a few minutes; but wait for me. I will return soon."

"This is all very strange and mysterious," thought Arthur, whose reflecting powers were completely restored to him. "I do not like to ask this kind-hearted, loving girl about her cousin, as she calls him. But how could he know this Marinier, and his secret enmity to me? It is very suspicious! He knows the

Carib Chief, and this Marinier, who is no doubt a conspirator, though he has escaped for the present. Let me see! Dallas's description of the two taken is short, but it may guide me. Le Bar and Petun are their names—they have lived some time in Roseau, or the neighbourhood. He is a stranger, so the Carib said. One tall, fair-haired, grey-eyed; the other short, stout, and rather corpulent, bald, and red-whiskered. Ellam, I think, said that Marinier was thin, pale, and black-eyed, sharp-featured and without whiskers. It is evident, then, that he is still at large. There is certainly a conspiracy against us in the island of a serious nature. Can François Devrien have any connection with it? He was with Jack Diver, who had been found in the house of the traitors. Could he be a traitor too? In his hyperbolical language, the Carib had hinted at a red ant traitor, whom the wasp would sting to death, because he hated him. The Master of the 'Sally' had insulted the Chief grossly and barbarously. He had

interposed, and saved him from suffering and indignity. The Carib might be grateful to the one, and wish for revenge upon the other—François Devrien had not shown any knowledge of the Carib Chief at the waterfall, but now he owned that he was well acquainted with him. Then, Devrien had departed suddenly—he might have some suspicion that the conspiracy would be discovered, and had fled—whither? Could he ask Rosalie?” As he was endeavouring to arrange in his mind the tangled and confused ideas which Rosalie’s words had suddenly conjured up before him, the fair creole returned; and, again seating herself by him, she said:

“I have seen my father, my friend, and asked him about Marinier. He knows no such name, but recommended that you should immediately send to the post-office to inquire if any letters had come for a person of that name, and to put them on their guard, should letters arrive in future, as to his character. And now, my dear

friend, I am going to ask you a favour, which I hope you will not refuse, for Marguerite's sake. Let me be able to dissipate her fears when she is strong enough to hear my voice—let that dreadful letter, to a remembrance of which she will awake, be as a dream. Tell me your history, that I may repeat it to her. Tell me that you love her fondly, that I may gladden her heart. She deserves it—she is worthy of a pure, undivided, unselfish love. She has slept in wretchedness, let her wake to happiness. Will you not, my dear friend?"

It would have been difficult for any one to resist the winning look of the lovely, warm-hearted creole.

It was not, however, without a struggle that Arthur commenced his history, but, when he did, he told it freely and passionately.

He told her of his boyish love, of the Grange, of his cousins, of poor Dinah; then of Oxford, of Sir William Deverell's strange will, his hopes and his fears, his illness, and his mother's sad

death. Then he passed to Morley : how gradually it was hinted, then rumoured abroad, that his mother had never been married, how once more he had declared his love to Edith, how she had scornfully rejected him, and then how, in the bitterness of his heart—in his unsupportable anguish, he had given up all idea of disputing his uncle's claim to Morley, and had basely fled, deserting his mother's cause like a coward. How he had entered the army, and had chosen an unhealthy climate, where war was raging, that he might die.

He revealed all, concealing nothing, perverting nothing. All that he knew, all that he felt.

Then, how he had been interested in Marguerite's story ; how she had charmed him by her simplicity and beauty ; how he had hoped to forget in her love the sadness and mortification of his spirit ; and how her sudden illness had driven him to the verge of insanity.

Of his secret enemy he could tell nothing, for he knew nothing—not even that he had one.

"I am not worthy of dear Marguerite's love," he said, after his sad tale was concluded ; "for I have allowed my mother's fair fame to be dishonoured. I have no title even to my name ! That right has a coward—a bastard, to seek the love of such a bright and noble being ? Oh, Rosalie ! when she hears my miserable story, will she not despise me ? The world will point me out as a disgraced, dishonoured being !"

The fair creole answered, kindly :

"Compose yourself, my dear friend. Do not look at things through so gloomy a medium. Marguerite loves you—she will ever love you, through good or bad report. Pray only that she may soon recover. I promise you, with the help of God, that she shall love you dearly—early !"

"It can never be ! I am fated to be unhappy myself, and to cast misery around me !"

"Do you not see that, in all this," continued Rosalie, "you have two powerful enemies, one

hidden and mysterious, but who may yet be to light? the other—forgive me, my dear—is your self-willed, desponding mel Rouse yourself—cast it off! Look bright side of things. Let your love and guerite have full play. It will discover the secret machinations of your enemies shall regain by love what you have lost. What will not love effect!” and Rosalie and her eyes were moist, for she remembered her parting with her lover.

“You are an able pleader, my dear,” said Arthur, persuaded, though not convinced, and looking with admiration at the lover who had thus been addressing him with studied eloquence, “and your cousin Frank a fortunate man. Would that I had his goodness of heart, and his happy prospects!”

Rosalie looked displeased. “You do not say what you say, my dear friend,” she said gravely. “Do you imagine that there is in the world unhappy, and unfortunate,

yourself? François may have more grief, and his days may be darker than your own. I, whom you have considered gay and coquetish, I too have my sorrows." And Rosalie's eyes were filled with tears.

"Forgive me, my dear friend, for my petulance. My selfishness is again rebuked."

"You have made me the confidant of your wrongs and sorrows, and I, weak girl as I am, have ventured to give you some advice, which you, a man, have not scorned. Will you, in your turn, listen to my sorrows? Oh! Captain Conway, I fear for my cousin François; his rashness, his confidence in himself, his very lightness of heart, are so many pitfalls beneath his feet. Oh, my dear friend! I, a devoted follower of our holy religion, which upholds the sacred right of kings—I, the daughter of a Legitimist, love, yes, love with my first and only love, an unbeliever, a Republican, a follower of those cruel bloodthirsty men, who have shed the blood of their King as an oblation to the idol they have set up for their god, Liberty."

"I guessed it," said Arthur, half-speaking to himself.

"And yet you envy our happy prospects," murmured Rosalie. "Even so is the world."

"Can nothing be done to reclaim him?"

"I have tried," she said, mournfully: "I pointed out to him the unholiness of their ways. I appealed to his love. I offered him myself, and all that my father has. I plighted him my troth: and what did he concede to me for this, grudgingly and reluctantly? Why, that as he was bound for a time only, after—mind, after—that time should elapse, he would quit the service of the Republic. Ah, when will that be? Tell me, is there any prospect of peace? We hear so little of what is going on in the world, I may have judged him harshly; peace may be at hand—is it so?"

"Nay, I will not deceive you. I fear, until the Bourbons are reseated on the throne of France, Europe will be disturbed with perpetual strife, which will reach even here across the

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"There is no prospect of this war ceasing, then. Ah, me ! must that fearful scourge pursue us even to this atom on the surface of the globe?"

"Are you not aware, Rosalie, that a dangerous, and I fear extensive, conspiracy has already been discovered in this island? Two of the leaders of it have been already arrested. I heard their names to-day."

"You terrify me dreadfully," said Rosalie, starting, and turning deadly pale.

"No, no, there is nothing to be frightened at, at the present, for it is discovered."

"Captain Conway," she said, slowly, "I perceive your meaning. You suspect that my cousin François (how she persevered in calling him a cousin !) is connected with this conspiracy. Fear it myself."

"Yes, from your own words."

"Do not speak in riddles, I beseech you. Let me know the worst."

"He is not one of those arrested ; and I trust he has quitted Dominica. Nay, after all,

it is but suspicion. Yet, did he not say that he knew Marinier and the Carib Chief; and was he not, two days ago, in company with the Master of the 'Sally?' Marinier has been bribing the soldiers. The Carib is doubtful. The Master of the transport has been found at the house of the conspirators. Is there no ground for suspicion?"

"Yet, my dear friend, he is not your enemy. He loves you, and would not wrong you. Did he not say you might repay him fourfold?"

"And, Rosalie, I, too, love him. He may be mistaken and misguided, but he cannot be unworthy, if he loves you, my sweet friend. I already owe him a deep debt of gratitude, and when I can, I will repay him. Has he not shown me myself? Has he not warned me of personal danger? Has he not told me the name of my secret enemy? delicately, it is true, and without compromising his party, as he thought, for who could imagine a Jesuit to be leagued with Republicans?"

Then he began to muse within himself. "Ay,

I must know more. I shall never be content, now, until the whole mystery is laid bare. If I have a secret enemy, he must have a cause for his persecution. I must go back to the beginning. I must get this dear girl to say more. She must tell me what she knows of her lover, François Devrien. Can he be acquainted with my mother's sad story? Old Devrien said his linen was marked De la Motte: by heavens, now the plot thickens! All since the morning of yesterday. A nest of conspirators taken; a mysterious enemy partially revealed; an anonymous letter; a fair, loved girl in danger; her dearest friend in tribulation for her lover, whose very name has kindled strange emotions.

"Rouse yourself, Arthur Conway, you have now some one besides yourself to think of. The apathy of melancholy must vanish. You must reflect, and act. Your honour is at stake. Stumbling-blocks and pitfalls are in your way. Snares are around you. Love lights the dark, mysterious, winding path; follow it to the end,

boldly, but warily ; from this moment there is a new era in your existence ; be resolute, and prosper." At that moment, Arthur forgot Edith despised himself, was ashamed of his weakness, determined in his own mind to marry Marguerite, to sift to the bottom his uncle's claim on Morley, to leave no stone unturned, to discover his hidden enemy, and vowed that at any cost he would rescue his mother's name from the slur cast upon it.

His intentions, his resolutions, were good, but he had no strength of mind to carry them out.

Rosalie had perceived the weak spot in his character, but she knew its extent, its fearful depth, no more than he did. She had loved him but once, and that love, though a cloud now rested on it, had always been returned. She had not felt, therefore she could not know, the fearful and lasting effects of encouraged, though unrequited, love on a young and ardent temperament. She dreamed that she had infused a new spirit within him which, with his new life

for Marguerite, would for ever efface his gloomy impressions and wayward melancholy. She had been silently watching the workings of his mind, expressed on his handsome and ingenuous countenance: she thought she had succeeded, and for the time she was right.

“Forgive my abstraction, my sweet friend,” he said. “I have been striving to arrange, into some form, this strange turmoil of ideas and circumstances. I have been thinking, Rosalie, of something your kind father told me yesterday: my mind was too preoccupied at the time to follow it up, but now I feel that it may throw some light on a part of my history that I wish much to clear up. Tell me, Rosalie, if it does not offend or wound your feelings, something of him you love. I am aware, already, of three things; that he is not your cousin—that your uncle adopted him, and that the name of De la Motte was on his clothes when found.”

“Nay, you cannot offend me, and I owe you this in return for your confidence; but indeed,

your knowledge of him nearly equals my own."

"Rosalie, in my mother's name, I ask it of you."

"I will tell you all I know, willingly," said Rosalie, "but that is, indeed, little: my uncle François was a merchant at Marseilles, he had a small country-house, not far from Fréjus, Provence, to which he used often to retire.

"One summer's evening, as he was sitting under the shade of an olive-tree in his little garden, he heard the sound of a horse galloping furiously by; he ran out to see who it was, but he could only just catch a glimpse of a tall man on horseback disappearing amidst the trees; a little way off, on the grass, he saw something like a bundle which the man had probably dropped, for the mark of the horse's hoofs was close alongside it. His curiosity was aroused and his astonishment was great when he perceived that what he had taken for a bundle was a living being, a warm and breathing thing

senseless child, of about three years old. His face was bleeding from a deep cut in the forehead, and his dress was soiled as if he had been rolled in the mud. He was a handsome boy, however, and his clothes were of a superior quality to those worn by peasants. My uncle had a kind, compassionate heart; he pitied the poor, senseless child, and carried it into the house. Round its neck there was a small miniature, set in pearls, of a handsome young man, in the uniform of the Garde Royale; and at the back some braided hair, partly raven black, and partly bright golden colour, like Marguerite's."

"Strange! my mother's hair was of that hue: she was very proud of it," said Arthur, musingly. "Go on, my dear friend."

"There is very little more to tell," replied Rosalie. "François, the child I mean, when questioned as to how he was left in such a state, either could not, or would not, say anything about it: perhaps the blow on his head

had hurt his little brain, and caused him to forget everything that had passed in his infancy; I have spoken to him myself often about it, but he still says that he forgets everything. My uncle, who was a widower, and childless, adopted him as his son, and he has always passed as such, bearing the same name; and when he died he left him all his fortune, appointing my father his guardian. I was sent to a nunnery at Paris to be educated, and François, who had been also sent to the same city for a similar purpose, used to visit me at the convent. Gradually our childish friendship ripened into love. Alas! his wild and ambitious spirit has led him into a dangerous and unholy course. After they slew our sainted King, who is now in heaven," and here Rosalie crossed herself devoutly, "I went to London, and François to the West Indies, as he said, to look after his property, but, in truth, I hope he was disgusted with the *sans culottes*. He visited us several times here, and my father

is still ignorant that he is a Republican. Beyond that fact, and that he is serving with Victor Hugues, I know very little of what he has been doing. Alas! I only know that I still love him." Rosalie could bear it no longer and burst into a flood of tears.

* * * *

Reader, have you ever dreamt? How gloriously do those bright scenes pass before you!

In a few moments a history.

How vivid! how defined! Awake! remember them if you can.

So it was with Arthur. All that he had heard seemed only to perplex and mystify him. He remained the whole of the next day at La Belle Etoile, Marguerite was pronounced a little better. Mr. Gordon took up his abode there also, and Arthur found favour in his sight. He returned to Roseau, and learnt the whole detail of the arrest of the conspirators.

Marguerite slowly recovered from her dan-

gerous illness, and Rosalie kept her promise, as soon as her adopted sister could 'bear it: she told her Arthur's history. She wept over it, and sympathized in his woes, and her love for him increased.

He came and declared his love: she threw herself on his neck and wept for joy.

Still neither she nor her uncle left La Belle Etoile. And Arthur went there day by day, sometimes even staying for nearly a week together.

Jack Diver remained in the hospital at the Morne for a long time, hovering between life and death, and was regarded as a prisoner until he could clear himself.

The 'Sally' sailed without him.

Our hero sought everywhere for Marinier, but he could not find him. The mule was traced to its owner, but he disclaimed all knowledge of who had hired it.

Amos Jones was arrested, and lost his business. The Carib Chief was invisible, though a

strange figure had been seen by the sentries several times, hovering about the hospital.

Rosalie was sad, for François did not write. She, however, received one short note from him two days after his departure, saying that he had arrived safely at Guadaloupe.

The note was thrust under the door, and no one knew who brought it.

The example made of the two Frenchmen, it was supposed, had smothered the conspiracy, for no more tampering with the soldiers took place, and, although spies were out in the town, nothing fresh could be ascertained.

The British settlers, merchants, and storekeepers, however, were organized into a respectable militia force, and every precaution was taken to prevent surprise.

There was a lull, a deadly stillness, treacherous as that which precedes the veering of the hurricane.

* * * *

During the next three months, Marinier was

not idle. The Middle Ground, as the plantation of young Pierrot was called, was the scene of his operations. He became a regular pensioner on the house, and rarely stirred out beyond the precincts of the plantation. During that time, however, he contrived to gain a great ascendancy over its inmates, and, through the medium of Pierrot's grandson, whom nobody could suspect, he quickly ascertained that his letter to Marguerite had failed. How he could not tell. But as Arthur Conway visited La Belle Etoile day after day, and Miss Gordon was still there, both which facts his spies soon found out, it was evident that the letter must have either miscarried, or that its effects had not been such as he wished. He resolved to change his plan. At the festival of Les Roses and Les Marguerites, he had mingled with the crowd of negroes, in disguise, that he might judge of the feelings of that race against their masters, and there he once more encountered the mulatto, Lemantin. A letter which he wrote to England, probably about the

middle of May, though there is no date to it, has been preserved in the manuscript, and it will best explain his proceedings about, and up to that period.

It is directed to the "Marquis de Charolles, Post-office, Plymouth," and is written in French, in a very peculiar style.

"Monsieur,

"According to your instructions, I have endeavoured, to the best of my ability, to carry out your intentions with regard to the young man. Hitherto, through some mysterious and unaccountable influences, my efforts have been frustrated. The tools I have used have either been blunted or broken. The money that I ventured on red cloth has been thrown away. The traders are arrested, and the buyers hold the goods.

"The speculation in the French article that I wrote to you about was a mistake, for I could excite no jealousy or competition; the market was already occupied. Even from the man I

reckoned upon, I can get no information as to the disposal of the goods, for he is sick, and confined to his bed. As you advised, I tried the effect of a letter to spoil the market, but that, too, has completely failed. Still, there has been no risk, and, although the stock is still on hand, the venture, I trust, is still secret. I have gained over the people I am living with to my views, and I have already acquired a powerful assistant, with whose aid I cannot fail. A good watch is kept, and a new plan for disposing of the goods has been already made. It may be some months before the issue is known, though I can venture to prophesy its entire success. But money is wanted to carry it out. I shall, therefore, draw on the Baronet for five hundred dollars, which I trust he will honour. This for your ear. You desire to hear some of the news stirring in the West Indies. The crops promise well. There has been an earthquake, which has done some damage, but only in certain localities. It is rumoured that Victor Hugues is making great preparations for attacking the different

islands held by the British ; he is uncommonly active, and, since Guadaloupe has been re-taken, has become a very dangerous neighbour. We may expect to hear of him here during the summer. Two French settlers have been hanged for bribing the soldiers, and shooting one of the guard. There is very little more to tell you, except a bit of island gossip. The officer commanding the British troops—his name, I think, is Captain Conway—is to be married very shortly to a very pretty girl, a Miss Gordon, who will have a considerable fortune. Scandal, however, says that he is only trifling with her affections, which is sometimes exaggerated into a case of deliberate seduction. . . .”

The rest had been torn off, probably to prevent it from being read by the person for whose eyes the latter part was meant.

The long, eventful day has closed ; the curtain of night has fallen upon the stage ; before it is raised again, we must close this chapter.

CHAPTER VI.

THREE months have rolled away—it is difficult to retrace our steps—therefore in the last chapter we briefly narrated the events of that period before opening upon fresh and exciting scenes. The curtain is raised again. The Middle Ground appears on the stage glowing in a July sun.

On a bench in the shade of a lofty hedge of Barbadoes pride, where the flame-breasted humming-birds were busily darting to and fro and buzzing merrily round the orange-striped flowers, sat two men of remarkable appearance.

He was low in stature, thin, pale and intellectual, with sharp features and quick, expressive eyes. The other was man as an animal, tall, robust, with limbs not unsymmetrically made, but of almost gigantic proportions. His round bullet-shaped head was covered with short, curly black hair. The upper part of his face was good, and his large round black eyes were almost soft; but the jaws and mouth were immense, with a fearful expression of gross sensuality, which was heightened by a short black beard on his chin, and a fringe of the same coloured hair on his upper lip.

The whitey-brown colour of his skin, his large under-jaw and bull-neck, showed his alliance with the negro race, although his figure was cast in a mould that would have served a statuary for the model of a gladiator.

These two were the Jesuit, Marinier; and the mulatto, Lemantin.

Crouching down, or rather crawling like a worm, upon the earth behind the hedge, amidst

the matted weeds, was a dusky figure. Lying before him, on a huge dock-leaf within reach of his hand, was a short light bow, ready strung, and with an arrow fitted to it. He lay perfectly still, and scarcely seemed to breathe. There was but little air stirring, and although the two seated on the bench were conversing in a low tone, their voices were audible at some distance. Yet so stealthily had the crouching form drawn near, that they had not heard his approach.

"The boy has not passed, brother, on his way back—the path has been watched carefully," said the tall mulatto.

"All the better—all the better; if he remains there but two days longer his disgrace is certain."

The mulatto grinned horribly and said, laughingly:

"What a droll fellow you are, citizen: why not say his death at once?"

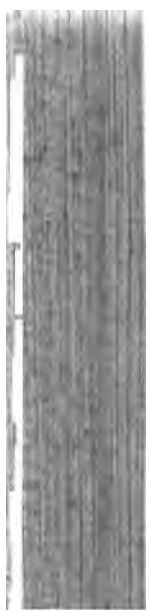
"I have told you repeatedly, Lemantin, that I do not want him killed—that is, just at pre-

sent. No, this is what I wish, understand me **well.** In two days from this the Republican **troops** land at Rocroix from Marie Galante, of **this** I have certain information; but the boy **knows** nothing. They will gain a footing on **the** island, and will be joined by you know **whom**; by-and-by the regulars and militia will **gain** information of this, and will march to **meet** the French Republicans. But the boy **must** not know of it in time to be at their **head**—they will send messengers to him, but **the** messengers must not arrive at their destination. If he remains at La Belle Etoile good, **something** will happen; but should he leave it **of** his own accord to return to Morne Bruce, he **must** be prevented. Do you understand me **now?**”

“ Yes,” briefly responded the mulatto.

“ Are you quite sure he has not passed?”

“ There is but one path, and there are five **men** on the look out, they will obey my orders, **drunken hogs** as they are.”



she is your ; but the fair-haired Eng
Margaret Gordon, must be mine to
please with—will you guarantee this?"

"What do you want with her?"
the mulatto, surveying with inexpress
tempt the wizened shrivelled little m
side.

"For a wife, to be sure."

"Now you are joking with me."

"Not at all—and we must have a
the ceremony, one who would like t
principal actor in it."

"You speak in riddles, brother."

"I did not mean to do so. We
the three up into the mountains. You

in his presence. He must witness the ceremony. When that is done, we will not kill him—no, that would be too merciful—but we will give him up as a prisoner to the tender-hearted Victor Hugues. Should he escape, he will be tried by a court-martial and disgraced : if not, he will perish miserably in a dungeon at Guadeloupe.”

“Ha ! it is a good plan, I have no doubt, though I don’t understand why you are so eager about it ; but there is one thing you have forgotten brother. What is to be done with that cursed Le Blanc ? he will be looking for his mistress.”

Marinier bit his lips ; he had thought of this, but had trusted to the mulatto’s want of foresight.

“ He is rash, and may be killed. Even if not, why should you care ? Are you not his equal, nay, are you not in many respects his superior ? Look at that figure formed to command ; those limbs with the strength and power of a giant ;

rise, throw off the yoke. You are strong enough : let not the Frenchman thwart you in your love."

As he said this, Marinier cast an admiring glance on the huge frame of the mulatto. The giant arose, and stretching his figure to its full height, he threw himself into a posture of defiance, at the same time regarding his muscular limbs with evident complacency, and holding out his brawny hand to Marinier, he said : "You are right, brother, and I thank you ; your words have fanned into a blaze what has been long smothered in my heart. It has burnt and burnt for years, but has never blazed forth before this."

"You care no longer then for Le Blanc, and will do what I wish?" said the Jesuit, insinuatingly.

"From henceforth, I care for no man. You whites, curses on you, seek to rule the whole world, tyrants and oppressors as you are, and the drunken negro hogs tamely submit to the

Lash. Here, at least, the coloured men shall not, if Lemantin can kindle a kindred spirit in their breasts. They shall lead, the Caribs and negroes will follow; then neither French republican nor English aristocrat shall breathe the air of this beautiful island but on sufferance."

"And have you never thought of this before?" inquired Marinier, surprised and amused for the moment at this sudden outbreak of passion in the gigantic mulatto.

"Never but in my dreams; I, though not a slave, have tamely yielded to the insulting superiority of the white man. Now it is different. You have opened my eyes—I see. Rosalie the aristocrat shall be mine. I will rival Le Blanc, and if he stands in my way—woe unto him. The fair-haired girl is yours—it is a bargain," and he grasped the small, thin, bony hand of Marinier in his.

"This is as it should be, Lemantin. You will want money to keep your followers in pay, nothing can be done without it, I will supply

you with some in return for this. How can you muster for the attack on I Etoile?"

"Enough to settle accounts with the aristocrat Devrien and his fawning slave plied the mulatto, haughtily. "There is one man I should like to associate with this business, and that is the Carib Chief Captain Baron as he is called—if I can find him. He knows the country better than I do."

At the mention of the Carib Chief the crouching form slowly raised his head, stretching gently forth his hand with a gliding motion, seized the bow noiselessly. A sudden instinct had warned him of danger.

"Do not seek him," replied Marin sternly. "I tell you that man is dangerous—to me, to you, to all of us. I warned Le Blanc of it. The earth took him to the waterfall—to warn you, and to tell all to his friend, the boy

he take the oath? no, why was he then at La Maison Vide? a spy! I tell you he is a spy of the red-coats. And after him, what think you of your favoured rival, Le Blanc, is he to be trusted? What made him bring that John Bull sailor to the meeting? why is he a friend of the Carib? why would he not listen to what I said? why did he write that note to the boy? trust them not, Lemantin; get rid of them when you can—how you can.”

While the Jesuit for his own purposes was thus insinuating suspicion into the mind of the mulatto, the dusky figure concealed amongst the weeds, as if it had heard enough, began slowly to writhe itself away inch by inch, still keeping its head towards the hedge, holding the bow in one hand with the arrow fitted to the string, a slight rustling and shaking of the leaves alone marking its progress. When the figure had moved about ten yards in this painful position, it sprang suddenly and silently on its feet, and displayed the supple and graceful

form of the Captain Baron. Fortunate it was for those who sat on the bench that they had not perceived his retreat, for the death of one, if not of both, would probably have been the result. Even as it was the Carib drew the arrow to its head, and pointed to the spot where they were sitting, while a fierce and yet scornful expression passed over his features; but with a motion of supreme contempt he lowered the bow, turning the point of the arrow to the ground, and gradually relaxed the string—then giving a shrill scream like that of a wounded hawk, he sprang amidst the rocks and bushes and disappeared. Startled by the cry, which, echoing from crag to crag, from rock to rock, reverberated on all sides, Marinier and the mulatto jumped up from the bench, and stared wildly around. From the broken nature of the ground it was impossible to tell exactly from whence the sound proceeded—they listened, it was not repeated.

“ It is a signal, no doubt, from some of the

men on the look-out," at length said the Jesuit.
"The boy is coming. Hold firm, Lemantin;
but do not injure him."

The mulatto, bursting through the fence, hastened down the ravine, nearly in the same direction taken by the Carib; and, scrambling over the cliff, in a few minutes reached the spot where the five negroes were concealed, guarding the narrow pass near the sea.

Marinier quietly reseated himself on the bench, but there was a nervous twitching of the muscles of his countenance, as he listened intently for the sound of fire-arms. He cared little who suffered, if his end was attained. The plot was well laid, and could scarcely fail; yet, knowing the superiority of the white man over the negro, both in skill and courage, he could not help feeling some anxiety as to the result. He waited some time, but neither Lemantin nor his prisoner appeared.

The mulatto reached the ambuscade, which was planted where a broken cliff came nearly

down to the black rocks that studded the beach. A narrow track, just wide enough for a single horse to pass, wound amidst them here, passing immediately under the face of the cliff so close, that the rider's head touched the twining, twisting roots and branches of the tamarisks, that clothed its side; and again bending downwards towards the uncouth rocks, amidst which it seemed to lose itself.

"*Qui vive ?*" shouted a voice from behind a low wall of rock near the sea.

"*Egalité pour tous ?*" replied the mulatto; "is all right, Antoine ?"

"*Person n'a passé, mon maître,*" said a tall negro, in broken French, with a long rusty gun in his bony fist; "an *agouti* rustled through the bushes above just now, but nothing else has stirred."

"Did you not hear a hawk scream ?"

"We did, but supposed it was a warning from you."

"What could it have been ?" muttered the

mulatto. Then aloud: "Keep a good look-out, all of you. Fifty dollars, if you take him alive."

The negroes grinned horribly. Throughout the world it would have been difficult to find five such ferocious-looking ruffians. Hideousness, gross sensuality, debauchery, cruelty, all the evil hyena-like attributes of man, without one redeeming quality, were pourtrayed in that armed group of nearly naked negroes.

The mulatto, satisfied that his expected prey had not escaped, and that his followers kept a good look-out, retraced his steps towards the place where he expected to find Marinier.

As Lemantin, after climbing over the cliff, was crossing a small open glade, a shadowy figure, coming suddenly from behind the stump of a hard-wood tree, placed itself directly in his path, without, however, showing any decided tokens of hostility. The mulatto was startled, for he was provided with no offensive weapons,

except a long knife, and he quickly perceived that the man before him had a bow, ready strung, and an arrow fitted to it, in his hand, although he held the point towards the ground. For a minute they remained face to face, looking at each other.

"The mulatto, Lemantin, seeks the Carib Chief. He is here," said Le Baron, in a tone where contempt was not concealed.

"It was you, then, who gave the cry just now?"

"It is the signal of Le Baron, when he wishes to be found. What wants the mulatto of the Carib? It is peace between them."

"Not only peace, Le Baron, but if you will join us, it shall be perpetual alliance. But how came you to know that I wanted to speak to you?"

"The Carib's ears are long—sounds are borne to him from afar."

"Nay, some one must have told you."

"Marinier," briefly responded the Chief.

"Ha! that plotting, planning devil. Why, only a few minutes ago, he was warning me against you—trying to set us against each other, when it should be perpetual friendship between us. Le Baron, see the cursed cunning the white man. These Frenchmen want us to help them to take this island from the red-coated aristocrats, and promise us equal rights, 'liberty and equality.' Bah! when once they have conquered, they will keep everything for themselves; we shall still be like worms, trodden under their feet. Shall we let these things be? Shall not this beautiful island be for us, not them? What says the Captain Baron?"

While Lemantin was thus speaking, the Carib did not attempt to interrupt him, but the expression of scorn on his features grew deeper and deeper. When thus appealed to, he opened his lips, and said:

"Le Baron wishes to hear more: let the mulatto speak on."

Lemantin warmed with his subject, for, although an uneducated man, and of a fierce and cruel spirit, yet he was possessed of a latent energy and ambition, which, had it been cultivated and properly directed, might have raised him from that state of degradation which his fierce passions and brutal sensuality had hitherto subjected him.

"Yes, Chief," continued he, raising his voice, and speaking with much animation, although it must be understood that we are translating his words, for he spoke in the *lingua Franca*, "yes! there are thousands of beings in this island, and the adjacent ones, pining for real liberty. I know it, for now I feel it in my inmost heart. Why should the white men oppress us—grind us under their heels? Are we not flesh and blood like they? Let us rise, and throw off the yoke! let us meet cunning with cunning, force with force! We have felt their galling chains, and their cruel lash. We will repay them with death! Yes, the white

shall die; but, before they die, they shall be to feel what coloured men have felt, deep, degrading agony, and their women shall live for us, to rear our children until we them; when they grow old they shall be our slaves. The mulattoes, the Caribs, the negroes shall form one family of us; the Frenchmen shall drive away the Indians, they in their turn shall perish. Will you join the enterprise?"

Laron waited patiently until Lemantin had finished, then, speaking slowly and deliberately, he

The mulatto has spoken, now listen to the Chief. The Caribs were a powerful people on the mainland, they lived where the great river drove back the waves of the sea, the orange bird perched on the dark cliffs amidst the everlasting forests far, far into the land. They were a mighty people then; but Manitou frowned, the Arcovagi

came and drove them into the sea ; the ~~se~~ ^{ir} piraguas floated on the waves ; they sought ^a new home, they found it. In these beautiful islands there were then neither hurricanes ~~nor~~ earthquakes ; the Caribs lived happily, they ~~had~~ many slaves. The white men came over ~~the~~ sea in their winged ships ; then the wind blew, and the earth shook. They were a mighty people who could withstand their thunder. Yet the Carib was still free. He was never a slave like the drunken negro, and the fawning mulatto."

"What mean you?" interrupted Lemantir, furiously, "is it not bad enough to be ridden rough-shod over by the cursed whites, but shall a paltry Carib insult us?"

"The negroes and the mulattoes are hogs," said the Chief, contemptuously: "a Carib may hate the whites, but he spits upon the blacks."

"Hell and the devil!" almost screamed the mulatto, drawing his knife, "but you shall pay

The Carib retreated a few paces, and putting his hand to his mouth, screamed like a hawk.

In a moment, two men, dressed and armed like the Chief, sprang, as it were, out of the ground, on each side of the mulatto, throwing off the mask of leaves and bushes under which they had been so closely concealed, that none but a Carib's eye could have detected them; and throwing themselves suddenly on the mulatto, they brought him at once, powerful as he was, to the ground, binding his limbs at the same time in a powerful manner with lathes of wild vine; and as he attempted to cry out, they gagged him with a piece of hard wood which they forced between his teeth and fastened securely behind his head.

The Baron looked calmly on without the slightest sign of approbation, but when the two Caribs let go their hold of the mulatto, and he saw him lying bound and helpless, he drew an arrow from his quiver, and sticking it upright in the ground, he pointed to the shadow, and

spoke a few words in his soft native tongue and then abruptly took his departure.

The two Caribs sat down, and, laying their bows, with their arrows ready, across their knees, watched the mulatto in silence.

CHAPTER VII.

ON the same spot, beneath the same old grove-tree, where the lovely creole and her republican lover had so nearly quarrelled, perfectly unconscious of any immediate danger, of everything in the wide world, of what he held encircled with his arm, Arthur Conway. Marguerite's head was bowed on his bosom, and her soft, blue eyes were upturned towards his, with the expression of a saint gazing upon some holy thing. Lost in one of those delicious dreamy trances of

love, those moments few and rare of true and exquisite joy upon earth, their lips moved not, but their eyes and their hearts interchanged communion—silent, but oh, how speaking! Yet between these two what a contrast. His was but the momentary delirious intoxication of passion, and an unreal evanescent feeling of love, the effect of habitual self-deception. Entranced, fascinated, flying from himself, he thought, and at times persuaded his conscience, that he was devotedly, truly, attached to Marguerite, and in her presence, with his arm round her waist, with her warm, sweet breath on his cheek, with her fair, clustering ringlets falling lightly all around, with those soft, blue eyes beaming love—heavenly love—smiling, and innocent, and trusting upon him! this might be wholly true, but in the silence, the thoughtfulness of the sleepless nights, Edith!—Edith the jilt!—Edith the coquette! Edith the mercenary!—still Edith!—ever, ever Edith!

Yet thither he had gone, day after day ; lured ~~there~~—dragged there by some irresistible attraction. It would be difficult to analyse his feelings exactly, so strangely were mingled together wounded pride, revenge, and love. Not ~~that~~ he was consciously playing Marguerite false ; for the time, at least, he was sincere. No, ~~he~~ was deceiving himself. Had any one hinted ~~that~~ he did not love her, he would have told that man it was a lie. But a sigh, a smile, and word from Edith, would have dissipated the whole fabric of his love, as the swollen, pent-up river, bursting suddenly through the heaped-up barrier of densely jammed ice sweeps away, with resistless power, everything that impedes or checks its headlong course. But Marguerite's love for Arthur was pure and undivided. The first yearning of a romantic, ingenuous heart is to love, and be beloved ; when that love is once avowed, there is no mistrust—no suspicion ; the belief is perfect—the abandonment complete. Woe unto that man who trifles with a young

maiden's first, artless love ! The very simplicity of it is so pure—so beautiful, that it ought for ever to be held sacred. Is it so ? Alas, alas ! how many wasted forms—how many broken hearts ! the drooping lily, and the cankered rosebud, tell the sad tale of woman's love, and man's depravity !

Marguerite was a child of nature. Her love was an idolatry—her faith in him was perfect. She had seen no one to compare with her Arthur—neglected, unloved for years, save by her fond old uncle, this to her was a new existence, full of sunshine as yet unobscured save by one passing cloud. O, how supremely happy she was as she reclined there on Arthur's bosom, listening greedily to words that sounded in her ears like an angel's voice, bearing tidings of heavenly love. Her face was suffused with a glow of seraphic pleasure, and gradually her eyes sank upon the ground, and her lids were half closed as if she could scarcely bear the bright gleams that passed from his. Suddenly

Marguerite uttered a faint scream, she had seen the shadow of a man moving over the smooth sward.

Arthur started up and drew a pistol from his breast, a man was standing with his back to the sun looking at them placidly. Arthur Conway for a moment did not recognise the figure before him, but cocking his pistol he presented it at the Chief.

The Carib held out both his hands to show that they were empty, but in other respects remained imperturbable.

"It is the Carib Chief, dear Marguerite," whispered Arthur, lowering his pistol at the same time. "Come, my sweet one, let us receive him kindly, although he has broken our dream of love."

Marguerite, taking Arthur's hand, approached the Carib with a winning smile on her ruby lips, and, with honeyed words, thanked him for his assistance at the perilous scene which had

caused her so many hours of suffering, and so many moments of delicious rapture.

The Carib bowed his head and veiled his eyes with his hand, as if the resplendent beauty of her charms were more than they could bear, but he did not speak.

Arthur, too, held out his hand to the Carib, and bade him kindly welcome in the hyperbolic language he had found best understood by the chief; but he neither moved nor uttered a word. Yet, in all this, there was no ungainliness, no awkwardness of manner; it was pure unsophisticated nature,—his nature.

Arthur had noticed the Carib's taciturnity at the waterfall when others were present; it was evident enough that the chief had something of importance to communicate, or he would not have sought him, so he whispered to Marguerite his desire to be left alone for a short time. To her, his wish was as a command, and no sooner had she gone, than the Carib's manner

changed immediately; taking Arthur's yet extended hand, he raised it to his lips, and still holding it, and letting his full, soft, black eyes wander over the young soldier's graceful figure, he said, in his broken, though musical language, which we will translate.

"The maiden is fair as the flower of the Orange-tree, her words are like the humming of the wings of the flame-breasted bird, her hair is as the fresh sulphur on the mountain top, she shrinks from man as the creeping plant in the Savannah. The English Captain is a happy man."

"The Chief is very good," replied Arthur, pleased by the Carib's words. "What can the English Captain do for Le Baron?"

"Le Baron has come to redeem his promise," replied the Chief. "In two suns the white ants come to Rocroix, the red ant Chief must no longer bask in the light of the maiden's eyes if he is brave and would remain a Chief."

"Is the Chief well-assured of this?" asked Arthur, hesitatingly.

"A Carib never lies to his friend," replied Le Baron, haughtily.

Our hero mused for a moment. The Carib words, few as they were, had recalled suddenly to his mind the embittering truth, that he had been, and was neglecting his duty.

It was a cruel pang to part with Marguerite, and to her it would be doubly cruel. Yet it were better for both that he should now no longer delay, for should she discover his negligence, she would blame herself as the cause, and her happiness would be destroyed perhaps for ever. Then, once again, like a sickly gleam of pale blue lightning, there flashed across his brain a faint flickering consciousness of that terrible day-dream, forgotten for weeks, banished by Marguerite's confiding love, now only to be smothered by resolution. It was taken promptly, although there was a struggle, for his voice was hoarse, and his cheeks were pale as he said:

"The English Captain will have his horse

saddled and will ride into Roseau directly :—
will the Chief go with him ?”

“The English Captain is brave,” replied the
Carib, “and Le Baron loves him, he does not
wish to see him die.”

“There is no danger in the path to Roseau ;
the Captain is well armed,” replied Arthur.

“The maiden must not lose her Chief, the
black ants beset the narrow path, their guns
are long, their Chief is cruel. Will the red ant
trust the wasp, if so, he may laugh at the black
ants. It is well.”

Arthur laid his hand on the Carib’s shoulder
and said :

“What means Le Baron? do the negroes
are to rise in arms against the English, does
the Chief know by whom they are led ?”

The Carib replied, by one word, slowly
pronounced, “Marinier.”

The name startled Arthur. It was the same
Tom Ellam had told him of as seducing the
soldiers with money, and inquiring about him in

a suspicious manner. This was the name of the man who answered the description of the one seen by the gamekeeper at Morley. This was he who had written the anonymous letter, and now here he was, heading an ambuscade of blacks, according to the Carib's account, to waylay if not to kill him. What could this man's motives be? What his object? He was not conscious of having injured or offended any man—why should they seek his capture or his death? If Marinier had so recently followed him from England, he could scarcely be joined, heart and hand, with the republican party. For the second time a consciousness glimmered on his mind, that this man's hatred, or whatever motive was urging him on, must be personal: he had forgotten much in Marguerite's love. If the Carib's story were true, and he saw no reason to doubt it, his situation was indeed critical. There was but one narrow horse-track leading into Roseau, and this was now beset by armed men, placed there by some.

unknown enemy, for the purpose of waylaying, if not of killing him. The French were to land in two days at Rocroix, it would take nearly that time to march there. The Carib had promised to guide him. At any sacrifice, he must be at the head of his little force. There was something mysterious about the Carib, which he could not quite understand, but it would be fool-hardy to neglect his warning, and wrong not to proffer by his offer of assistance; besides the artless praises of his mistress, almost poetically spoken by the Carib, still sounded sweetly in his ears. He would put himself under his guidance.

While our hero was making up his mind, the Carib stood silently watching him, and when Arthur expressed his readiness to trust to him, he showed no symptoms of satisfaction, but said merely, "It is well," then taking an arrow from his quiver, he stuck its point in the smooth sword, and said,

"When the shadow falls on the other side, Le Baron will call the English Captain."

Arthur quickly perceived the delicacy of the native's words and action, and wringing his hand, he hastened from him into the house. The chief threw himself at full length in the shade of the mangrove tree, and watched the arrow.

We will not attempt to narrate Arthur's parting with Marguerite. It was the first pang she had felt since he had declared his love to her; but to all appearance she was cheerful and resigned. He stated to her the absolute necessity of his presence at Morne Bruce, and did not attempt to conceal the probability of an encounter with the French republicans. She did not weep or faint, but told him that she would pray for him day and night: his was a holy cause, and God would assist him. Though she bade him go and prosper, yet twining her arms round him she seemed to wish him to stay. Then one long lingering kiss, and they parted. Rosalie, too, her coquetry subdued by the dread of losing her republican lover, embraced him tenderly, and prayed him, for her

sake, to be merciful to the republicans. Old Devrien, too, shook him warmly by the hand, and the slaves, headed by Pompey, gathered round him, and vied with each other in demonstrations of respect as he left the house of La Belle Etoile.

As soon as he had quitted it, poor Marguerite's resolution failed her, and she fell fainting into Rosalie's arms.

And now for some time we must leave La Belle Etoile to follow the fortunes of Arthur Conway, and the Carib, through some strange scenes.

When Arthur went back to the old man-grove tree, the Carib was still lying on the grass watching the arrow, but when he saw our hero approaching he sprang nimbly on his feet, and drew it out of the ground.

"The English chief has not delayed, it is well," said the Carib. Then leading the way he took precisely the same track which Le Blanc and the Master of the transport had used on

the day of the oath, only in the opposite direction. Arthur Conway followed silent and abstracted, and trusting entirely to the Carib.

Near La Maison Vide the Carib, suddenly putting his hand to his mouth, uttered the shrill hawk-like cry, startling Arthur from his reverie. The cry was returned from a thicket of stunted mangroves, and a figure dressed and armed like the chief, but lower in stature, and adorned with duller feathers, glided from it.

The chief addressed him in a few words in their soft language, which were of course incomprehensible to our hero.

"It is well," said Le Baron, "La Perouse says the cotton tree is ready."

They had reached a sparkling stream, partially overshadowed by the mangroves, and from amidst a densely growing mass of luxuriant weeds, the two natives lifted a long light canoe and launched it on the water.

Le Baron got in first, and motioned to the young officer to creep in, and lie at full length

in the bottom of the canoe. He complied, and La Perouse, gathering a few palmetto and fern leaves, covered him up. Then launching the canoe fairly into the river, he crept cautiously in himself.

One stroke of the paddle, and the head of the light piragua was pointing down the stream. The Chief strung his bow, and laid his quiver of arrows across his knees, and his example was followed by La Perouse. Seeing this, Arthur drew his pistols from his breast, and carefully examined the priming. With rapid, yet almost noiseless strokes of their paddles, the two Indians urged the piragua swiftly down the now dull Lethein stream, while their bright keen eyes wandered here and there amidst the tangled mangroves, and every faculty seemed at its utmost stretch. Nothing, however stirred, but a lazy iguana, or a solitary dipper, and no sound, save the gentle splash of the paddle in the black sluggish stream, disturbed the grim silence of the lonely spot. Presently emerging

from the dim, sombre shade of the matted mangrove branches, the canoe shot suddenly into the bright sunlight of the glowing sea.

They had glided on smoothly, but rapidly, for nearly two miles towards the south, when for a moment the Carib ceased paddling, and in a low voice told Arthur to look towards the land. Raising his head over the gunwale of the canoe, he perceived that they were about a quarter of a mile from the narrow sandy beach. Above were scattered rocks, amidst which wound the narrow horse track, and then rose a broken cliff, furrowed with water courses, and clothed to the summit with fantastic shrubs.

"Does the English Captain see nothing?" said the Carib in a soft whisper.

"He sees nothing but water, rocks, and trees," replied Arthur.

"Look!" said Le Baron, and putting his hand to his mouth, he gave again the sham hawk-like scream.

Suddenly, from the shadow of the rocks,

sprang up several dark figures, their gun-
barrels gleaming in the sunlight.

There was evidently confusion among them,
for they all huddled together like a flock of
sheep. When from the side of the cliff,
emerging from the tamarisks, a single figure
could be seen scrambling nimbly down; in a
moment he was with the groups of negroes,
and they could see him with an impatient
gesture pointing towards the canoe.

"The mulatto, Lemantin," said the Carib in
a scornful tone; then motioning to La Perouse
to do the same, he applied himself vigorously to
his paddle.

Two or three bullets whizzed through the
air, or splashed into the water, but they were
too far off for the firing to have any effect,
beyond that of convincing Arthur of the fidelity
of the Captain Baron.

CHAPTER VIII.

WHITE vaporous clouds were wreathed ~~in~~ in fantastic shapes round the mountain tops, descending and mingling amidst the massive forests with the curling fog-banks. The air was damp and chilly. The reeking earth, and the teeming wilderness of castor-oil plants, diffused through the atmosphere a sickly nauseating odour. A gleaming, feeble, halo-circled moon, and here and there a pale star peeping faintly through the mist, telling that night had not yet passed away, shed a dubious light on the plateau of Morne Bruce; yet, bugles were

ounding, drums were beating, and armed
gures were moving busily to and fro. Some
ere were falling into their ranks noiselessly
ad steadily, accustomed to discipline, and
edient to the word of command, though
asionally a passing oath, or a rough jest,
the appearance of the others, might be
ard amongst them.

The second party were mostly clad in white
ckets and trowsers, with belts of all sizes and
atterns slung carelessly across their bodies,
hile their arms, not piled, but leaning against
e walls, or lying carelessly on the ground,
ere of various forms and sizes.

There was, however, an air of cheerfulness
and determination in their countenances, show-
ng that the work before them was not repug-
nant to their feelings, and their active muscular
bodies and bronzed complexion proclaimed them
formidable foes.

Many of the militia were attended by negro
slaves, to carry their firelocks, and the small

supply of food they were enabled to take with them.

There was one group of about fifty warriors standing and lying about in every variety of attitude, that attracted universal attention. — Some few had ships' muskets or rifles, but far the greater proportion were armed with nothing but a light short bow, and a shark-skin quiver, filled with small copper-headed arrows. Some had a short axe in their belts, others a naked knife, and about a dozen carried in their hands a knotted club of hard wood.

All wore nearly the same dress, if dress it could be called—a circle, or coronet, of brightly coloured feathers, from the paroquet and macaw, surrounded their heads: on the crowns, their sleek, well-combed black hair was twisted and tied into a knot, through which was thrust a large fish-bone, or a piece of polished copper. Round their waists was a belt, sustaining a short tunic, open at the hips, all covered with the plumage of birds. Some had bracelets of cop-

Wore strings of coral, round their arms ;
Bands of tortoise-shell, amber, or copper :
Two had their noses and under lips
Decorated with small pieces of the same materials,
In which gold and silver were occasionally added.
Some had strings of a red seed round their legs,
And from the necks of a few of them hung a
Chain of highly-polished copper, by a string, on
Which were threaded seeds and pieces of coral,
Mixed with metals.

Some parts of their bodies exposed to the sun
Were anointed with some oily preparation, of a
Particular red colour.

They did not mix with the white men, but
Remained apart, preserving a dignified silence ;
And they evidently watched the movements
Of the regular soldiers with great curiosity.

When the bugle sounded for the men to fall
In, they all sprang on their legs, and imitating
The regular soldiers as well as they could, they formed
Lines, without any apparent leader, into a
Company.

Ammunition was served out by a sergeant to such as had muskets, which they received in perfect silence, and stuck the cartridges into their quivers.

There was little military parade. No music struck up with enlivening sound to cheer them on the march, but there were in that small and motley force, brave hearts that wanted it not.

There were but three regular officers, whose names it is not necessary to mention. One was appointed to form an advanced guard, consisting of twenty Caribs, and a few regulars. Then came the main-body, under another officer, consisting of the whole of the militia, with eighty men of Arthur's regiment: and the rear-guard was composed of the rest of the Caribs, with a sergeant's party of the regulars. Arthur himself had not as yet appeared.

An orderly arrives on the parade, a word of command is given, and the little force moves off from the Morne, down the zigzag road, in the order given above, La Perouse heading the whole, as a guide.

Three horses, duly accoutered, with holsters at their saddle-bows, are held by three armed Caribs, in front of Arthur's quarters. Inside are three men, Dallas, Arthur, and the Master of the transport. Three cups of fragrant chocolate are standing steaming on the table, but they are untasted. In the verandah, quietly smoking his pipe, under the trailing creepers, the Captain Baron is calmly waiting.

Our hero is in a determined, and not altogether placable frame of mind. Dallas is as usual, cool and collected. The Master of the transport exhibits, in his countenance, a fearful picture of passion, hatred, fear, and perplexity.

In the rear of the house, two black men are carrying something on a litter slowly and laboriously—there is a linen cloth thrown over it. Tom Ellam is walking close to it—he has a paper in his hand soiled and crumpled; he is trying to make out the direction.

"There is no time to deliberate, Sir, on what is proper or improper; either you go with us,

and by so doing prove your loyalty, or you will be tried by a court-martial—I give you the choice.”

These words were addressed by Arthur to the master of the transport, in a decisive and somewhat imperious tone.

“It’s only a ride, Captain, and it will do you good,” said Dallas, quietly; “you have a tendency of blood to the head, and the exercise will stop it.”

“I have not much time to give you, Captain Diver,” said Arthur impatiently, taking out his watch. “There is a horse outside ready saddled for you, and there is a guard-room occupied by militia—they at least will take care of you, and should anything happen to us, it will exasperate them, and you will be either hanged or shot; whilst you are with me you only run the risk of a bullet from the French; once that my back is turned, I cannot answer for your life. I give you five minutes to make up your mind.”

Jack Diver remained sulky and silent. Dallas began to sip his chocolate, looking up occasion-

ally at the master of the transport. The young officer went to the door and called out :

"Come in, Le Baron, and take a glass of eau de vie before we start."

The Carib Chief entered at the call, and his dark meaning eye glanced like a spark of fire as it fell upon the master of the transport. Jack Diver felt an unaccountable thrill of fear steal over his frame when he beheld this man stalk into the room with noiseless step. He almost screamed, for there could be now no doubt that his presence at La Maison Vide was known. In the twinkling of an eye all his stubbornness vanished. The singular appearance of the Carib Chief, dressed precisely as he had been at the taking of the fatal oath, could not be mistaken. A deadly fear came upon him, for he now at once recognised the man he had wished to flog on the deck of the 'Sally'—everything in a moment flashed before his eyes with a fearful reality. One word from the Carib Chief and his fate was sealed—death ! ignominious death !

There was a chance, an alternative. Dallas watched his wavering awe-stricken countenance.

"Take a cup of chocolate, Captain Diver. The morning air is chilly and bad for an empty stomach: we have a long ride before us."

The master looked with an expression of horror at the surgeon, for now he understood what he had said before; but he held out his hand to take the cup of chocolate that Dallas offered to him: he put it to his lips, but it tasted like blood.

"Let me feel your pulse, Captain," said the surgeon. "I fear something has made you unwell."

"Dallas!" said Arthur, in a reproving voice.

"Ha!" continued the surgeon, without noticing Arthur. "Face flushed—pulse feverish—heart palpitating—no appetite—bad symptoms! A ride in the cool of the morning is my prescription."

"Curses on all three of them!" muttered

Jack Diver ; " they know all. I must go with them. But that fearful oath ! Damn it ! I can't help it—better to break it than swing. Give me a glass of brandy, Captain," he said, hoarsely, " instead of this woman's stuff. I know that I'm in your power now, thanks to that bare-backed, sneaking spy of yours," and he scowled fiercely at the Carib.

" An ounce of lead against a hempen string," said the surgeon, laughing.

" You are mistaken, Captain Diver," said Arthur, gravely. " The Captain Baron has never mentioned your name at all."

" Then how could you prove it against me ?" exclaimed Jack Diver, " without —" But here he paused, for he suddenly became aware that he was condemning himself.

" The symptoms are increasing," said Dallas, pouring out a glass of brandy, and handing it to the Master. " Swallow this, and get on your horse at once, if you will take a plain man's advice."

"I am ready," replied the Master, tossing off the spirit.

"How is this, Le Baron?" said Arthur, turning to the Carib, and speaking in a low voice.

"The white ant-traitor speaks for himself," replied the Chief. "His time is come!"

"What does the Chief mean by his time is come?" said Arthur, inquiringly.

The Carib was silent, and, before Arthur could repeat his question, Tom Ellam entered the room hurriedly, and, saluting our hero, held out to him a crumpled and dirty paper.

"A note for you, Sir!"

Arthur took it, and looked at it for a moment. The seal had been broken, but the direction was still legible. It was to him.

"Where did you get this, Ellam?" he inquired of the soldier, before he read its contents.

"It's a strange story, Sir, but it's true as gospel, Sir. The nigger who makes the choco-

late for you, Sir, went down to Jack's Well to get some of the clear spring water for that purpose. There's a clump of bamboos close by, that shades it from the sun, and under them he saw what he took to be a nigger sleeping. He kicked him with his foot, but he did not stir; he stooped down, for you know it was nearly dark and found it was an old, grey-headed nigger; but —" and here Ellam paused, shuddering.

"Go on!" said Arthur, impatiently.

"It's very horrible, Sir! The poor old brute wasn't asleep, nor was he dead; for he still breathed. But the ants had already eaten out one eye, and were busy at work with the other! They came crawling, creeping out of his mouth and ears, when the boy shook him, for he didn't at first see what was the matter."

Dallas rushed out of the room; Arthur turned sick at the description; the Carib remained imperturbable, and Jack Diver felt that something was coming beyond what had already

" Well, Sir, the boy was frightened to tell me of it. I was in the stable as I had got the horses all ready, I got to some dark chaps to hold ; and, knowing they were busy, I got a shutter from the stable and a couple of black men to help me go down to the well. Sure enough, the boy had told the truth. It was a horrid thing—half rotten, Sir, and not yet dead. When I recovered myself a bit, I looked particularly at him ; and though he was so much, I thought I knew his face. It was a very old man, with tufts of white hair on his skull, and very short and shrivelled. I remembered it was the old nigger, who was found at the house where Tom Connolly found the Frenchman waiting on the sick girl yonder."

And Ellam pointed at Jack Diver.

" The negro, Pierrot," said the Constable tentiously.

The master of the ' Sally ' began

more and more ; he feared what was coming, and was now impatient to be gone.

" I saw a dirty-looking letter in his hand, as we were lifting him up, and I took it from him, as I thought it might be something of value—a note, like ; but when I looked at it closer, I found it was directed to you, Sir ; so I brought it here at once."

" Very well — that will do, Ellam ; wait outside. What can this be ? Some petition or complaint, I suppose ; yet they would say it was a bad omen to start under. Poor old man, what a death ! Is he dead, Dallas ?"

The surgeon had re-entered, and his ruddy cheeks were pale ; he filled himself a glass of brandy, and drank it off, and then said, seriously : " In the whole course of my practice, I never saw anything so horrible as this. The ants have actually eaten into the brain. He will be dead before he reaches the hospital, but his body is already corrupted—a mass of living rotteness ; but nothing can be done for him,

and we might as well start before the sun rises."

As Arthur was buckling his sword round his waist, he said: "What could have taken him to the well? Just see what the letter is, Dallas; there's a good fellow; I had nearly forgotten it."

Dallas opened it.

"It begins oddly enough," he said.

"I am your enemy. I love Rosalie Devrien, Stop," and he finished it to himself.

"Well, what is it?" said Arthur, who had heard but imperfectly what the surgeon had said.

"Too many people here, Conway; this is marked very private," said Dallas, significantly.

"Ellam," called out Arthur, "are the men all gone yet?"

"The rear guard are just going past the mess-room, Sir."

"Halt them, and send the sergeant here."

"Yes, Sir."

Ellam ran across, and stopped the party, and was back again in a minute with the sergeant.

"Now, Captain Diver, I cannot stand upon any farther ceremony; if you please, you will accompany Sergeant Owens—you know the alternative," then, turning to the sergeant, he said: "Owens, you will take charge of this gentleman, you will be civil to him; but he is on no account to leave your party until I come up."

While this was going on, the Carib Chief glided quickly out of the room, across the grass, to the rear-guard; he spoke some words to Il Duque, and as quickly returned.

The sergeant touched his cap, and replied, briefly:

"Yes, Sir."

Jack Diver arose sulkily, and followed him, meeting the Carib face to face on the steps. The Chief, however, took not the slightest notice of him. The Master, with a curse, pressed on, and scrambled into his saddle.

Sergeant Owens, taking the horse by the ~~the~~ bridle, led him across the grass to the rear-guard, and, placing him in the centre, gave a word of command for the party to move on.

"Now, what is it, Dallas?" said Arthur, turning to the surgeon. "I fear it is some bad news, by your looks."

The surgeon hesitated. He was deliberating in his own mind whether he should tear the note up, and say nothing about it; and then he reflected on Arthur's peculiar temperament. If he came back alive and well, and the shock should fall upon him suddenly, it might drive him mad, or kill him—better, then, to be prepared for the worst.

"This is a note from a man signing himself
"François de la Motte Devrien."

"Why, he has left Dominica nearly three months!"

"Very likely; this has evidently been written some time ago, and may be all moonshine, after all."

"Come, Dallas, the men are gone ; let me hear what it is, or give it to me."

The surgeon handed him the soiled and crumpled note.

Arthur read it. As the surgeon had anticipated, its effect was fearful.

"Oh, my God !" said Arthur, turning deadly pale, and shaking like one in an ague fit, "the mulatto Lemantin !"

At this exclamation, the Carib Chief, whose presence had not been noticed either by Arthur or the surgeon, pricked up his ears, like a dog when he hears his name called.

"Dallas, that is the man who heads the band of rebel negroes, that fired at me in the canoe. My God, my God ! they are not three miles from La Belle Etoile, and Marguerite is there. I never thought of this."

His agitation became fearful to behold.

"Be calm, Conway, I beseech you. After all, this may be only a *ruse*, to get you to lessen

your force, small enough already, for any purpose."

"Dallas, I am calm," said the horror-stricken young man. "But nerves of iron would not stand this shock without giving way a little."

There was a fearful struggle going on in his mind, as he said this, between his duty to his country, and the awful feeling that his beloved mistress was in a terrible danger. He would have flown there himself, and died in her defence, but could he desert his command?

Dishonoured, disgraced for ever, on the one hand, even if he should save her—misery and a broken heart, even if he returned a conqueror. Well had old Pierrot played Marinier's game; unconsciously, it is true: but, oh, how successfully! At length, with a voice unnaturally calm, as if despair had steeled his nerves, he said, turning away from Dallas: "Let us go."

"Stop one moment, Conway: Ellam is outside with his arms, and there are three Caribs

holding the horses. Send them over at once to La Belle Etoile. If they can arm a few slaves, they will be able to make a good defence against a mob of negroes."

As Arthur turned round, his eye lighted on the Carib Chief, and before he replied to Dallas, he said to Le Baron :

"Will the Chief do his friend a service? The mulatto Lemantin, and his bloodthirsty gang, go to burn the house where the fair-haired maiden rests. Will the Chief protect her?"

"Le Baron cannot go," briefly responded the Carib; "but he will send his brethren with the soldier. They are brave."

"Does he, too, desert me?" murmured the unhappy young man; "but how could I expect him to go, when I cannot myself?"

"Dallas, your advice is good," he said, calmly, like one who has made up his mind to die, and fears no longer death's awful advent, "and I will take it. But they, too, may refuse to

risk their lives for me. Le Baron! What, gone?"

The Carib Chief had left the room, unperceived; but as he passed the three natives, he spoke a few words to them, briefly, but energetically. A slight groan, as a token of assent, was all their reply.

"Ellam!" called out the young officer.

"Here, Sir," said the soldier, quickly entering the room. He had been waiting in the porch, close by, and had overheard part of what had been said.

"Did you see the Chief pass out?"

"Yes, Sir; he spoke a few words to the dark men, and then went down the hill at the double."

"Ellam," said Arthur, slowly and painfully, "you have always been a faithful friend to me. I do not speak to you now as a soldier, for this is not an occasion for it: will you volunteer on a dangerous service, for my sake?"

"I heard all, Sir," replied the gamekeeper;

"you need not distress yourself. I am both ready and willing."

"Thank you, thank you, Ellam. I have one friend, at least. Should anything happen, tell her from me, that I will not survive her long; and if I fall in action, my last thought is of her; and—and—Ellam, do you understand me?—if—if they, the negroes prevail, she must not live. Better to die than to fall into the power of those fearful savages."

In the meantime, Dallas had slipped down, and spoken to the Caribs, and they at once expressed their willingness to go with the soldier.

The gamekeeper, rough as he was by nature, felt deeply for his young master. He had been many times out with him to La Belle Etoile, and as servants often follow their masters' example, so he had struck up a great friendship with the pretty little quadroon girl, Fanfan.

"If I may be so bold, Sir," said he, "as to venture a suggestion, could not a few of the militia men, who are left to guard the barracks,

be spared? say four, Sir: that will make us eight, and we might hold out a long time, against better men than niggers."

"And a very good suggestion, too," said Dallas; "eight resolute men, well-armed, will make them quite safe. It is not so bad, after all, Conway, and you may set out with a lighter heart."

The directions were given to the sergeant of militia promptly; and before Arthur left Morne Bruce, he had at least the satisfaction to see the seven, under the command of Ellam, who was appointed corporal on the spot, start for La Belle Etoile; yet his heart was sad, and his spirit was drooping within him. They might be too late—and then the anxious and heart-rending suspense.

But when he got on his horse, and rode down the zigzag road, his mind began to be occupied with other thoughts. He had never seen a shot fired in anger; he knew little of the strength of the force that would be opposed to

him; his own little army was a strange medley. He could depend upon the regulars, but they were scarcely a hundred in number. The militia were tolerably armed and drilled, and would no doubt fight well; but would they be in hand? Of the Caribs' manner of warfare he knew nothing; it was even uncertain whether they would remain faithful. Of the Chief he had no doubt; still there was something mysterious about him; and was his information regarding the time and place of the landing of the republicans correct? These reflections, happily for our hero, for the moment displaced the gloomy forebodings of evil with which his disposition, prone to melancholy, had again so nearly overwhelmed his reason.

CHAPTER IX.

ARTHUR CONWAY and the surgeon caught the rear-guard just as they had arrived at the head of the narrow valley to the southward of the Morne, up which the troops had to pass before they began to climb the mountain chain, which divides the windward and leeward sides of the island.

It is peculiarly difficult to describe in detail the general scenery of these gorgeous islands. They have been likened in form to a sheet of paper crumbled up tightly in the hand, and then released, so irregularly are the mountains put

volcanic action. To give the reader some of the broken nature of the scenery, it is, though it has never been measured, that are not more than three square leagues of ground in the part of Dominica called Terre. In the Basse Terre, there is one of a few square leagues, called the Grand nah. All the rest is mountain and valley, and hollow, yawning precipices and broken. Yet, in very few places is the rock except on the face of the cliffs that meet ocean waves, and this principally on the west side, for the land slopes more gently to meet the fresh trade-wind; but up to every summits of the mountains there is a tual garment of the loveliest and greenest vegetation that eye ever lighted on.

Arthur and Dallas rode up to the rear-land, the advanced party had begun to ascend mountain-track, guided by La Perouse. As there had been nothing to retard their progress; but now the path, if it can be dig-

nified by such a title, winding amidst rocks and trees and ever ascending, precluded the possibility of marching more than two deep, and in many places it was necessary to go in Indian file, so that, although the whole force did not number more than three hundred armed men, the distance from point to rear was very considerable.

Jack Diver was a very bad horseman; but the animal he rode was well accustomed to mountain travelling, and he being still weak from the effects of the fever protracted by the habitual use of ardent spirits, found it less fatiguing to ride than to walk. He was still in the middle of Sergeant Owen's party, grumbling and cursing, and in a very bad humour. He had seen the Carib Chief join the rear-guard in the valley, and again a sense of fear, vague and indefinite certainly, yet sufficiently powerful to shake his already shattered nerves to a fearful extent, crept over him; he even felt more secure when Arthur rode up with the surgeon,

although he hated both of them from the bottom of his heart.

Arthur called out to pass the word to let him fall into the rear. Jack Diver reined in his horse to suffer those behind him to go by. He looked stealthily at each individual ; but the Trib Chief was not there. In an open spot Arthur rode up to him. " I must apologize to you," said he, good-humouredly, " for my somewhat unceremonious treatment ; but you must be aware, Captain Diver, that it was the best thing I could do for your own sake. By coming with us, you will be able to clear yourself of all suspicion ; had you stayed behind at Fort Bruce, there was really much greater danger. The militia had got some information, know not how, that you had been concerned with Le Bar and Petun—the fact is, I dared not leave you with them."

" Thank you for nothing," growled the latter. " I'm in your clutches now ; but once out of them, look out for squalls. I'll be even

with you, fair or foul. Well, it's a pretty go—; a little whipper-snapper like that, with scarce a bristle on his chin, riding the high horse, and walking his betters off a prisoner, after having seduced his sweetheart. Well, if I don't owe you a sweet trifle, my young jackanapes, I'm a Dutchman, so look out for squalls, my hearty. And you, too, you sneering, red-faced sawbones, with your cursed laugh, only let me get a chance at you. I wonder whether the pistols in those gigamaree, what-do-you-call-ems, are loaded? As sure as a gun, I'll have a shot if they are, at somebody. That painted nigger with the feathers on his head first—then—”

“Captain Diver,” said the soft voice of our hero, “if you will promise me not to try to escape, you need not consider yourself any longer as a prisoner; and, if you can, you may remain a spectator when we meet the French.”

“I don't know what right you have at all to treat me in this way,” said Jack Diver, in a

Loud voice. At that moment a hawk screamed shrilly. The rear-guard were in a narrow path, bounded on both sides by a dense thicket of shrubs, so winding, that ten yards in front you could see nothing but stems and green leaves. Three of the Caribs slipped into the shadow of the bushes silently and stealthily. Those behind immediately closed up. Their absence was not perceived by any of the white men, and they remained hid until Jack Diver, Dallas, and Arthur, had passed about a hundred yards, and then came forth. Another man joined them. It was the Carib Chief.

Whether Jack Diver gave his promise or not, matters but little; for he was not one likely to be particular, if, by breaking it, he could gain any advantage; but the three still rode in the rear of the party.

To understand the following scene, it is necessary that the reader should have before his mind's eye the localities and the exact situation of the actors in it.

Nothing is so difficult to describe, even with the assistance of the limner's art, as a tropical mountain path. Unlike glaciers, Alps, and sierras, there exists a perpetual variety: one may say that at every yard the scenery changes.

The mountain range, running from north to south, along the centre of the island, sends out vast branches or spurs, radiating like a star to all the western points of the compass, intersected by deep valleys and awful ravines.

Sometimes these spurs reach the ocean, and end abruptly in a broken cliff; sometimes leaving, at their base, a small strip of flat ground, as at Roseau. Others again run out with sharp points into the sea, like Scott's head, forming bays, with a white sandy beach, as the one at the foot of the Souffriere; or narrow cavernous creeks, into which the heaving swell of the deep-blue ocean rolls with a hollow, reverberating sound.

The leading files of the British force had reached the end of one of these vast spurs,

where it joined the main chain, nearly in the centre of the island. The track, turning at a great angle round the head of the valley, entered suddenly into a deep, gloomy, tangled forest, out of the bosom of which rushed a narrow, but impetuous stream, leaping from rock to rock into the valley, far, far below. The water was swollen by a thunder-shower, that had burst over the mountains, though not a drop had fallen in the valley below: the rocks were slippery, and the passage dangerous. The officer in charge of the advanced guard, therefore, halted his men, to cut down bamboos, so as to form a temporary bridge over the turgid stream, and the axes were quickly at work.

The remainder of the party were still winding along the path cut in the mountain side, and covered, from front to rear, nearly a quarter of a mile.

It was an awful path; it made the eye quiver, and the heart sick!

Not three feet wide, in many places! Above, an overhanging cliff, or the steep mountain face,

five hundred feet of crag and broken rock : below, down, a thousand feet down, wound that stream like a silver thread. It seemed as if you could throw a pebble into its bed ; but it was far away ; the dizzy height mocked the sight. True, the eye was somewhat relieved by the wild, fantastic beauty of the shrubs and plants, which sprang up amidst the rocks, and dotted the side of the valley with vivid greenness ; but in one part, along which the rear-guard were now advancing, it was singularly awful. The spur threw out a bold elbow into the valley, and round the arc of the double curve, the path, a mere ledge of slippery rock, wound, with a precipice above and a precipice below, sheer, abrupt and stupifying.

Just as the last file of soldiers had doubled it, the word to halt was passed from the front.

In the spot where the three horsemen were stopped, there was a widening in the path ; a hollow scooped by the force of the descending water in the mountain's side.

Arthur Conway, not knowing what had

caused the apparently sudden halt, spurred his horse by the master of the transport, and calling to the men in front to make way for him, which they did by clinging to the faces of the rocks, rode forwards to see what impediment obstructed the march of the troops; and Dallas followed him, without either of them bestowing one thought on Jack Diver.

But no sooner were they shut out from his view by the men closing in again, than he determined to return by the way he had come, and to take his chance of getting on board some vessel at Roseau. His enemies would be out of the way, for some time, fighting the French; his consignees knew nothing of his treachery. With their assistance he might escape to England, and he might live to be revenged on him he hated from a double motive. And then the oath, and its fearful penalty, if he broke it. The French might overpower the small British force; he might be taken prisoner. And how could he clear himself to Le Blanc? Whilst he was making up

his mind, a dark figure had stolen unperceived close behind him, with a small basket in his hand of split reeds, out of which came a low, buzzing, murmuring sound. He lay down quietly across the path, at the point of the first angle of the elbow of the mountain spur, not many feet from the hind legs of the horse.

Jack Diver, with a scowling look, turned his horse round with some difficulty. It plunged and reared slightly, but went on.

Occupied with retaining his seat, the master of the transport scarcely perceived the figure lying in the path. He could not see who it was, for the face of the man was towards the ground. But the horse saw it at once. The animal, accustomed to mountain roads from its birth, had often stepped over both men and animals, which are sometimes forced in the narrowest parts to lie down to let the heavier and stronger pass, in that highly dangerous and disagreeable method, lifted his feet cautiously, one by one, so as not to tread on the prostrate

As the horse was above him, the man lifted with one hand the lid of the basket, and a swarm of wasps flew suddenly out, buzzing and humming fiercely, and in a moment they began to settle on the moving object.

The horse commenced switching his tail to drive them away, pricking up his ears, and snorting with terror.

The man on the path lay quite still until they had thus moved on a few yards, and then he raised his head a little, and watched them with his keen, black eyes.

The wasps, driven off for a moment, became only the more irritated, and returned with vigour and wonderful pertinacity to the attack, beginning to sting the poor animal furiously, in all the tender parts. They assailed the wretched master in his turn, darting their venomous barbs into his face and hands, and driving them both nearly frantic. The horse plunged furiously, and Jack Diver, losing his stirrups and his presence of mind together, twisted his hands into

the horse's mane to keep his seat, letting the reins fall on its neck. At last, with a rear and a bound into the air, the maddened animal darted off at a gallop, but the faster he went, the closer stuck the persevering wasps.

Jack Diver shut his eyes, screaming with fear and pain.

Then the Carib Chief rose up and again the hawk-like scream echoed along the valley. The turn is to be made—can the horse recover himself? Yes, maddened as he is he sees the danger instinctively. His speed slackens—he throws himself on his haunches, with his fore feet on the very brink of the precipice. One more chance! The blind infatuated man remains on his back.

Again the horse feels the stings of his deadly persecutors; again he plunges forward striving to turn quickly round the corner. Round, and he is in comparative safety.

On a sudden from behind a buttress of projecting rock there start across the path three

dusky forms, flinging their arms wildly in the air. Then was heard that rare and awful sound, the shriek of a horse in the fear of certain and coming death, when swerving on one side he lost his footing on the slippery shelf, and struggling madly but unsuccessfully to recover it, he fell over and over—down—down, a thousand feet down !

From the sailor's lips there came no cry.

But once more the hawk screamed.

A glorious feast to the ants and the Johnny crows !

* * * * *

Le Baron waved his hand from the point of the rock over which the unfortunate master of the transport had fallen. The three Caribs retreated swiftly towards Roseau.

Several of the wasps were still droning about as if seeking for a fresh victim, but the Chief stood there like a statue, with his arms folded across his breast and his eye fixed on a small dark spot far down in the valley. The insects

buzzed round him and seemed inclined to settle on his limbs—not a nerve or a muscle quivered. Had he some charm? or was it that his body was smeared with oil? One by one they flew off leaving him untouched by their venomous stings, and there he remained silent and abstracted. Who shall analyse his thoughts?

Arthur Conway stayed by the running water until the whole party had crossed it safely. When the last of the rear-guard were on the temporary bridge he missed Jack Diver.

He asked Sergeant Owens what had become of him. The Sergeant had never thought of him after he had been taken out of his charge; his men had been joking and laughing together, and had moved on after their officers had passed, and he had heard nothing but what he thought was a hawk screaming twice—and one of the men said that he had heard besides a strange unearthly cry.

Arthur had been standing close to the torrent and the noise of the water had deafened

him ; but when the Sergeant spoke of the hawk screaming, he recognised at once the Carib Chief's cry.

" What can Le Baron want ? Dallas, will you hold my horse for a minute, I must go back and see what has become of the sailor," said Arthur, somewhat impatiently.

" He has run away."

" I doubt it—I think I frightened him too much : at all events I will go and see."

As the young officer rounded the shoulder of the spur he saw the Carib Chief standing in the attitude we have described, but no Jack Diver. The native did not move. Arthur laid his hand on the Chief's shoulder, and said :

" Has the Captain Baron seen anything of the sailor who wished to flog him in the big ship?"

" The red-ant traitor is there," replied the Carib, briefly pointing to the abyss below.

Arthur shuddered, the marks of the struggling horse were distinctly visible on the brink of the precipice ; but in vain he strained his eyes to discover their bodies in the wild depths beneath.

"How came this, Le Baron?" he said, in a hoarse voice, for he immediately blamed himself for the sailor's death. "It is very horrible."

"The red ant traitor was a fool—he let his horse tumble over the rock where the path ends."

"Poor fellow," said the young officer, pityingly, "what a terrible fate!"

"The red ant traitor was running away. Why does the friend of Le Baron lament his death?"

Three times had the Chief repeated the words: "The red ant traitor." They brought to Arthur's mind his first interview with the Carib and what he had said on that occasion. The red ant traitor, whom the wasp wished to kill, but was prevented, was then the unfortunate master of the transport. The Carib was the wasp, Jack Diver the red ant. The Chief must have killed him—but how came both horse and rider where they were. That, for a long time, remained a mystery to our hero.

"He was a traitor, then?" he said, inquiringly.

"Why should the Chief lie? did he not take

the oath at La Maison Vide with Marinier and the mulatto Lemantin ?”

The Carib's words had, unconsciously, a terrible effect on Arthur. They recalled to him, in a moment, the fearful danger of his mistress, exposed to the attack of the brutal negroes : he turned away in bitter grief, and went back silent and dejected to the torrent. The Carib Chief stood on the point of the rock for some time in precisely the same attitude with his eye fixed on the same spot. And when he quitted it he did not follow the armed force.

“Well ?” said Dallas, as Arthur came up, pale and with anguish depicted on his handsome countenance.

“He has paid the penalty of his treachery—let us move on.”

They crossed the stream, and rode rapidly through the gloomy forest until they caught up the rear guard once more. Then the sergeant reported to Arthur, that many of the Caribs were missing, one by one they had glided into the tangled wilderness and disappeared.

A halt was made in the shade of the wood near a gurgling stream, which, gushing out of a rock, wandered, for a little way, through a tolerably level and comparatively open piece of grass-covered ground; grougrou palms, arecas, fern-trees, and gigantic bamboos were scattered or clustered around.

The sun was shining fiercely in the valleys and on the mountain's sides, but here, though there was little wind, the green leaves and the limpid water, the deep shade, and the moist grass, imparted a delightful freshness. The soldiers, throwing themselves on the ground, or seated on the rocks beneath the delicious shade, began to eat their rations, which they had brought ready cooked, and revelled in luxurious draughts of the pure limpid streamlet.

The Caribs were privately counted by Sergeant Owens, as they lay stretched or squatted on the ground; some already fast asleep, others smoking in perfect silence: instead of fifty, there remained but thirty. The Chief was not

there, nor was the one called El Duque. La Perouse, however, who had hitherto led them, was still present.

Arthur Conway, Dallas, and the other officers of the regulars and militia, were seated in a circle round some cold provisions, which the slaves of the latter had carried on their heads in baskets, when the sergeant reported to Conway the desertion of the Caribs.

It gave rise to many exclamations of surprise and surmises as to the cause of their absence. Some suggested that they had gone on before them, to give notice of the approach of the British force to the French; others thought that they might have done so, to bring them information of the position and force of the Republican troops; but none guessed the truth, not even Arthur, or, if he had a vague hope, he did not express it, but remained moody and silent. Not so the others, for, enlivened with their rest and food, both solid and fluid, they talked and laughed, and many a joke and many

a merry song, rang through the wilderness of forest, startling the parrots on the lofty trees, and setting them screaming, as they flew circling round.

Arthur rode at the head of his force, with La Perouse at his side; the track still ascending, as it wound through the dense forest.

"Does the English Chief feel the wind in his face?" said the Carib, suddenly.

"Yes," replied the young officer; "and I hear the roar of the sea."

They began to descend; the climate changed in a few yards, and the fresh trade-wind came refreshingly, fanning the heated and panting soldiers. The ground became more open, and the valleys more regular and less abrupt. Here and there, amidst the trees, the blue sea, dotted with white crests, peeped pleasantly. Everything seemed cheerier, gayer, more full of life, than on the leeward side.

When they had descended about two miles, the track made a sudden bend, at right angles,

to the northward, skirting the dense mass of trees, and winding round the heads of the valleys. Scattered houses and plantations could be seen occasionally near the sea, and the sail of a drogher, creeping along the coast, shone like a solitary sea-gull.

About two o'clock, as they were crossing a high, narrow ridge, the Carib pointed to the north, and uttered one word: "Rocroix."

The march had been a severe one to Europeans; for the heat on the leeward-side, although they had halted during the middle of the day, had been intense; and the extreme steepness and difficulty of the track had caused the distance to seem greater than it really was: but when they learnt that they had come in sight of Rocroix, a spontaneous cheer burst from every mouth, and they stepped out briskly and willingly. Strange that the sight of approaching danger should cheer the heart of man, but so it is with Englishmen. About four o'clock on the 27th of July, they came in sight

of the French, who had landed two days before, but dared not move until the promised reinforcements arrived.

It would be difficult, and it is not necessary for the story, to relate what manœuvres were performed, and how after a short but not bloodless struggle, in which regulars, militia, and Caribs equally distinguished themselves, the republican troops were signally beaten and forced from all their positions, till at last they were obliged to take refuge in some houses which they had temporarily fortified. One party of twenty-five escaped to Marie Galante in a large piragua, the rest were surrounded, and being entirely cut off from their supplies, after a few hours surrendered at discretion. One small party however, commanded by Le Blanc, still held out gallantly, though enraged at being duped by the French settlers and the coloured people whom he had expected to join him in force, and seeing casually some of the Caribs, who, contrary to their usual manner of warfare

had, in imitation of the British soldiers, shown themselves to the enemy, he began to despair of any successful defence, and weakened by the loss of blood from a severe though not dangerous wound, haggard and pale from starvation, want of water and rest, after one final effort to break through the British lines which had drawn closely round, in which he received another slight wound, he lost heart, as well he might. A flag of truce was sent by Conway, pointing out the uselessness and hopelessness of further resistance.

Le Blanc thought of Rosalie : if he persevered no quarter would be given by the Caribs, or they would die of starvation.

His proud spirit yielded, and after telling the men that brave as they were they could do no more, and cursing the treachery of the settlers and the negroes, he, too, surrendered at discretion. A captured tent had been erected for Conway in the shade of some palm trees. When Le Blanc, all bloody, with his uniform torn and

stained, his beard unshorn, his face ghastly pale, his cheeks all sunken, his eyes dim, one arm hanging helpless by his side was conducted before Arthur Conway, the young officer did not at first recognise the gay, sprightly, light-hearted François Devrien; but addressed him as a stranger kindly, complimenting him on his gallant defence, returning him his sword, and offering him his parole.

“Will Captain Conway have the goodness to offer me something to drink first? *Ma foi*, this fighting is thirsty work,” said Le Blanc in English.

“My God! is it indeed you, Devrien?” cried Arthur, starting up and filling a tumbler of rum-and-water, he handed it to Le Blanc who drank it greedily. “This is a strange meeting; but you are wounded and ill, let me send for the surgeon.”

“Answer me one question first,” said Devrien, in a hollow voice, “did you get a note from me?”

The question went to Arthur's heart like a dagger's stab. He turned deadly pale.

François, weak as he was, perceived his emotion and repeated his words, saying :

“ I sent you a note, did you not get it ? ”

Arthur thinking of himself and Marguerite, murmured :

“ Too late, I fear, it was too late. ”

“ Now I see why the mulatto Lemantin was not here. O, Rosalie, sweet Rosalie, ” cried the Frenchman in bitter agony, and overcome by weakness and emotion he fell fainting on the ground.

CHAPTER X.

WHEN Arthur Conway saw François fainting on the ground, he felt for the first time what a strong affection he had conceived towards him.

There was something mournfully sad in the sympathy that bound him to the young Frenchman. Marguerite had absorbed all his thoughts and fears until François had recalled to him another form, and another sufferer. Rosalie, who had been to him like a sister, Rosalie, the kind-hearted, the affectionate, the mediator between his wayward spirit and his love; she,

and reconciled him to the world, and had
led his path to the object of his affection—
now, was a sufferer. One was bound up in
her, not only himself and Marguerite, but
his and Rosalie, all alike—all equally.
more his selfishness was rebuked. He
acted promptly and decidedly.

assistance was soon procured, and Dallas was
cured. The wounded and senseless François
was addressed, and his hurts washed and ban-

There was nothing dangerous in them,
but the surgeon feared was over-excitement
which he awoke.

About two miles off, on a hill that sloped
downwards to the sea-shore, shaded by a
grove of palm trees, there stood a plea-
sant-looking house, in the midst of a
plantation. A messenger was sent to
inquire if the inmates would receive a wounded
man, and a reply soon arrived, saying that
though the master was away from the planta-
tion, the house was at their service. Indeed,

the overseer came himself, bringing with him refreshments of various kinds, that he thought would be grateful to the sufferers. A litter of boughs was constructed, and François Devrien, borne by four soldiers, was carried gently down to the plantation.

Dallas and Arthur rode with him, to see him safely lodged.

As they were putting him to bed, and changing his bloody linen for that of the master of the house, our hero perceived, hanging by a hair chain round the young Frenchman's neck, the miniature that Rosalie had told him of. His curiosity was keenly aroused, and he unclasped it gently.

The room was closely jalousied, and, to see it better, and to be alone, he went out into the porch.

He was painfully startled. He had seen that face before often—very often. He knew it well, every feature—every line. The eyes, the hair were the same, though here all was calm,

smiling, and gentle—there, all convulsed in the agony of death.

He turned it round. The black hair and the golden hair, twined and linked together, as Rosalie had said.

He took from his own neck a locket, and touched the spring. The same colour—the same shade—the same glossy silkiness !

But there was more. Above the hair was engraved the word “Eugenie,” below it “Raymond.” The hair and the name alike his mother’s ! A tear started unbidden in Arthur’s eye. It was the first he had shed since his mother’s death.

Yet, what a mystery ! How strange—how perplexing ! He longed for the time when he should be able to question François ; yet Rosalie had said that he knew nothing. Who could Raymond—the man in the picture be—Raymond and Eugenie. The names—the hair—the picture ! What a mystery !

He went back into the room, and looked

intently upon the pale face of the unconscious François. The same features, the same hair, the very image of the miniature; he had possessed it ever since he was a child. Raymond, his father! who then, was Eugenie—his mother. A strange desire to return at once to England, began to steal almost unperceived, subtly and treacherously over Arthur's mind, to throw up everything; his commission, his love, his fame, his honour, to do what it was nearly now too late to do, and what he ought to have done long ago, and what he would have done, but for his ill-fated, unrequited love, to clear away the cloud of mystery that hung around his birth.

Had he forgotten Marguerite? Yes, for the moment, in the selfishness of his new and all absorbing mystery, he did not think of her danger.

Dallas had been watching him. He saw him remove the miniature from the neck of the wounded Frenchman; he saw him go out with

it in his hand, and on his return replace it, after which he remained silent and abstracted, yet gazing intently at the features of his patient. Gifted with imperturbable coolness himself, he could still understand the singularity of Arthur's temperament, since his visit with him to La Belle Etoile. The surgeon had been watching him closely. There was much to admire in our hero's character; kind to his inferiors, gentle, yet firm, with the soldiers; cheerful, and even gay with his daily associates, he was beloved by all, and yet there was a brooding melancholy at times, a tendency to see things in their worst and most painful light, a selfish despondency which the clear-headed surgeon had quickly perceived; but not being aware of the original cause, he set it down as purely constitutional.

He spoke and broke the spell.

"Come, Conway," he said, "you are doing no good here; I will take care of this young Frenchman, and if you will leave him alone, I

will guarantee his recovery, but not otherwise."

"What did you say, Dallas?" said Arthur, awaking from his strange reverie.

I said, "If you stay here, you will only do my patient harm. You have plenty to do elsewhere; go, there's a good fellow."

"Yes; I have much to do," replied Conway almost mechanically; "but it will be too late."

"This is just the way always with you. Why do you look so sad about it. You have just done one good job, licked the French, *ecce signum*; get on your horse, and do another."

"Promise me, Dallas, to look after this wounded officer; if he dies I shall never be happy again."

"Pshaw! a little blood frightens you—he's only faint from loss of it; the best thing that could happen to him, for there will be no fever. I'll set him on his legs in a day or two; see, he is coming to already."

The young Frenchman's eyes partially opened as the surgeon said this, as if he had heard it, and his lips murmured one word, it was—
Rosalie.

Arthur stooped down, and imprinted a kiss on the pale forehead of the wounded man, and said in a low sad tone, "I know not who you are; but, henceforth you shall be my brother." Then, turning to the surgeon, he said, "Dallas, I go; take care of him for my sake." And he left the room.

The surgeon followed him with his eyes, and when he had disappeared, shook his head gravely, for he began to think that his mind was disordered; then, feeling his patient's pulse, and placing cooling drinks by his bedside, he went to look after the rest of the wounded.

Arthur's arrangements were quickly made.

An officer, with a strong party of the militia, was left to take charge of the wounded and prisoners, and to watch if any fresh attempt at landing should be made by the republicans.

Tom Connolly was selected with another steady man, to wait upon François Devrier, and to take charge of Arthur's horse, which he left behind for his use.

The Caribs had already disappeared.

Early on the following morning, the rest of the party, about two hundred strong, returned by the mountain-path to Roseau with Arthur Conway at their head. Nothing worth recording happened on the march. As they approached the town, Arthur became very impatient and hurried on, in advance of the men alone.

In the creeper-covered porch of his quarters there sat a man, pale, woe-begone, and with his arm bandaged. As Arthur bounded up the steps he rose from his seat with difficulty and attempted to salute.

Our hero's heart sank within him—it was Ellam.

“In mercy's name tell me what has happened,” said the young officer, in a voice full of bitter anguish. “Is she dead?”

Ellam looked at his young master with the best commiseration ; he had no good news to tell him, and he scarcely knew what to say.

"Speak, Ellam, I implore, I command you. I am prepared for the worst, see, I am calm," answered Arthur, in a low, quiet, yet unnatural tone, whilst beads of sweat stood on his brow and ran down his cheeks, his whole frame trembled visibly, his bright eyes were fixed and staring, and his hands playing unconsciously with his sword.

"I have little to say, Sir," said the soldier, slowly and unwillingly ; "but we have been ordered."

"Quick, quick ! tell me all : do not keep me in such awful suspense. What has been their order ?"

"I do not know, Sir." "You do not know ? and yet you are here ?"

"Ellam, I did not expect this of you," answered Arthur, reproachfully ; yet he was scarcely conscious of his words.

"I was never there at all, Sir. We could not force the pass."

"Not force the pass—not force the pass! What do you mean?"

"The negroes prevented us. They shot us down like deer from behind the rocks. Two of the dark men fell by my side. I was hit, as you see, Sir; and the militia men ran away as hard as possible: and what could I do, Sir, alone, and hurt, against a lot of armed men, even though they were niggers? They rushed out, screaming and yelling, like demons, and finished the two dark men with the butts of their muskets, Sir; but they did not see me, for I crept away behind the rocks, near the sea. Then, Sir, I fainted, and lay on the beach for some time, for when I recovered my senses, the sun was high up in the skies.

"I could not move, Sir, I was so weak with loss of blood; but I saw a long, narrow boat, full of men, coming from past the town, about a quarter of a mile out. I would have given

worlds to shout, Sir, but I could not speak; but it seems they saw me, for they paddled the boat in, and two of the dark men waded through the water, and lifted me in their arms into the boat, and gave me some cocoa nut milk to drink: a delicious draught it was, Sir. It revived me a little, and I could see and understand what was going on. They paddled on some miles, Sir, and went up a narrow creek; but I forgot to tell you, that after they had picked me up, one of them gave a sort of cream, but none of the negroes on shore bowed themselves: I suppose they had gone. They landed amongst some thick trees, and pulled out of the bushes a small canoe, which they put in the water, and then one of them, the tall man, Sir, with the feathers on his head, who was in the room when you started to fight the French, Sir, came up to me, and said, as far as I could understand him: 'Soldier, all the English Captain,' meaning you, Sir, that the Captain Baron is his friend; he is

gone to look for the mulatto, Lemantin.' I was still helpless, Sir, and they put me in the canoe, and two of the dark men paddled me back to the town, and left me there: that is all I have to tell you, Sir."

"Forgive me, Ellam," said Arthur, kindly, "for my inconsiderate words; you have indeed acted like a true and faithful friend, and I owe you much."

"Never mind me, Sir," replied the game-keeper; "I only wish I could have done something for you, Sir, and for myself too," he added, under his voice.

"Have you heard anything since?"

"Nothing at all, Sir. I could get no one to go out in that direction, they are all too afraid of the negroes."

"And have none of the Caribs shown themselves since?"

"Not one that I know of, Sir."

"What can the Carib Chief mean?—the mulatto, Lemantin! too late! ever too late! O,

my God! the Carib's idea is revenge—revenge only, not protection—misery, misery, he has gone to avenge her death, or what is worse—mercy, mercy, the thought suffocates me. Ellam, my friend, tell me what I must do. The Chief has been too late. I cannot think for myself—I shall go mad.”

“Here come the men, Sir. If I might be so bold I would take a strong party and march out to La Belle Etoile at once.”

“But they are jaded and fatigued by their long march, Ellam: it would be cruel not to rest them.”

“I'll get you plenty of volunteers, Sir, depend upon it. I'll just show them what the niggers have been doing to me. They're not over-fond of that breed, and they like you, Sir. So you have only to say the word.”

“Can I do this? Will it not be too selfish?” murmured the unhappy officer.

“Oh, no, Sir,” replied Ellam, who had caught his words.

“ Think, Sir, the negroes are in arms ; they will be burning, plundering, committing all sorts of horrors ; they’ll get hold of rum, Sir, and then think what will happen. Do let me go, and try if they will volunteer.”

“ God bless you, Ellam !” murmured Arthur.
“ Go, but mind, I do not order it.”

A mountain march of fifteen miles, in a broiling July day, in the tropics, and yet there was not a murmur ; not a heart but what was willing and ready to follow their officer, whom they loved. Some could not do it ; their physical powers had given way, and they alone showed any discontent. Fifty good hearts and true were under arms, after a couple of hours’ rest and a good meal. When there is work before them, what will not British soldiers do ? And Ellam, with his rough eloquence, though perhaps it was not necessary, had pointed out to many the cruel situation of their Captain ;— woe to the negroes who should come across them in arms !

Arthur passed the two hours restlessly, walking up and down his room in perfect agony. Every now and then he would stop opposite to the picture, where the dark-haired man was struggling in the throes of death; and would think for a moment who that man could be, but he could not reason. Too late! Ever that morbid despondency, ever the same idea that he was predestined to be unhappy. He would be too late, and Marguerite —

The two hours have passed away, and he is again on foot, at the head of his faithful soldiers. What thought he of fatigue in his mad excitement!

A dark and ominous cloud was rising above the horizon, immediately over the sun, which was now fast sinking in the west. Rays of fiery red, unsteady and flickering, darted upwards towards the zenith. Far over the sea stretched the shadow of that cloud, changing its cerulean to the deepest purple. The mountain peaks, and the light clouds that hung

around them, seemed all on fire, and the crests of the lofty trees were streaked with flame. A flash of lightning, of the palest, ghastliest blue, darted suddenly along the horizon, illuminating the leaden, appalling masses that came rolling over the sea.

Arthur saw not the storm rising in its majesty of terror—the storm was in his mind yet he did not neglect to take proper precautions against a sudden attack. Men were sent on in advance, and, where practicable, along the flanks ; but not a single enemy was visible.

As they passed through the narrow track between the cliff and the sea-beach, one of the men pointed out the marks of bullets on the rocks, and the traces of blood on the path. Arthur shuddered. This, then, was the spot where Ellam had been wounded. He recognized, in a moment, the rocks where the negroes had shown themselves, when the Carib Chief had screamed from the canoe, and there the dreaded mulatto, Lemantin, had scrambled down the cliff.

But now all was still, save the rumbling of the distant thunder, and the roar of the fast-increasing surf on the rocky shore.

They had not encountered a single human being on their way, to glean tidings of the probable fate of those they sought.

As they approached La Belle Etoile, Arthur's heart sank within him more and more. No signs of any one stirring—no negroes in the fields at work; but they might have sought shelter from the coming storm.

As he hastened up the narrow path, and at length stood on the lawn, what a sight presented itself to his eyes! What a sight for him, above all men! Where the house had stood, a charred, confused, black mass, from which small puffs of white smoke still came issuing forth.

For a few minutes, he remained stupified, spell-bound, gazing at the ruins.

The blue lightning ran along the hills, the thunder crashed over-head; the rain, as if the

clouds had suddenly burst, came rushing down in a seething torrent; an unnatural darkness settled all around; the earth gave up a reeking mist; the surrounding landscape disappeared: all was gloomy, terrible, and desolate.

The soldiers ran to shelter themselves under the trees, and in such of the out-buildings as had not been completely destroyed.

But Arthur stood there, staring at what had been the houses, unconscious of everything, save his own misery.

A vivid flash, a crash, as if the world was at an end, awakens him—he looks round. The mangrove-tree, so old and gigantic, under whose boughs he had so lately parted with Marguerite, was rent from top to bottom, its boughs scattered about, and its trunk on fire. What an omen! Then followed a frightful lull, broken only by the dropping of the water from the foliage of the trees.

The same dull, heavy stillness, was in Arthur's heart; another broad, red stream of

light, another rattling thunder clap, and again down poured the rain in one continued sheet, foaming against the earth. And still he stands there. But see; there is a sparkle in his eye, like the lightning flash, round his brow there gathers a dark, ominous cloud; the sound of a word like the thunder-clap rings in his ears, new, and until now unknown to him, called forth in the terror of the storm by that blackened mass of ruins, by that splintered and blasted tree, by the warring elements, and the desolation of the scene. A terrible word, more terrible in its novelty—Revenge!

A pale, rosy streak of light, at first narrow, but fast increasing in breadth, illumines the western horizon. Fainter and fainter the thunder rolls away amidst the mountains. The cloud is tinged with pink and gold. The sea glows with gorgeous colours. The pale rose-coloured streak becomes a fiery red; the sun has that moment sunk beneath the horizon, but yet far up into the zenith dart rays of flame, gradually melting into the soft blue of the evening sky.

And now the soldiers come forth from their shelter, and commence their search. Not a single living thing can be found. Here and there, amidst the out-buildings, are half-picked carcases of various animals, horses, cattle, pigs, and goats, lying where they had been shot down; a horrid stench arising from their mangled remains.

The mill, built of huge rough stones, has partially defied the power of the fire. What a sight was there; a mass of mutilated, disfigured corpses, men, women, and children, scorched by fire, half eaten by the ants, with their white teeth grinning in the horrid agonies of a cruel death; they were all negroes.

The soldiers drew back disgusted and dismayed at this shocking spectacle.

"The well—try the well," said an old soldier, "they hide there sometimes on such occasions."

The soldiers rushed to the well; the cord was cut in two.

"Hark!" said one, "I hear a groan; there is some one alive in it. Hallo! any one down there?"

Another smothered groan was the reply.

The sergeant rushed across to where Arthur was standing, and touching his cap, reported to him that there was a living being in the well.

"My God! can it be Marguerite? I have heard of such things before," and he flew rather than ran to the spot.

The soldiers had knotted some pieces of old rope together, and had fastened them to the remains of the one round the windlass, and forming, at the extremity, a stirrup, for the feet to rest in, a bold, athletic, young soldier, was carefully lowered down. His feet soon rested on something without touching the water: a deep groan startled him. "Hold on," he sung out.

There was little light in the well, so releasing his feet, and lowering himself a little, he groped about with them, until he found

round the thing that had first met him, clasping it tightly to his body, for, it was not heavy; he shouted out to the men above to raise him gently.

Arthur stood on the brink of the precipice, his heart beating with a beating heart, and trembling at the reappearance of the soldier.

Bitter, indeed, was his disappointment when he was stricken with horror, when the soldier, dripping, emaciated, but still breathing gently on the grass.

It was the pretty little quadroon girl, reduced to a living skeleton. A few drops of rum and water were poured down her throat, and she soon showed slight signs of

of three more female slaves were brought up successively, by the soldiers, and then they came to the bottom of the well, in which there was not four feet of water. These three were quite dead: but owing to some peculiar quality of the water, their bodies were not putrified.

The soldiers dug a hasty grave in the courtyard, and the bodies, and such of the others that could be moved, were collected by the soldiers, and deposited in the trench, and the earth thrown lightly over them, amidst many a bitter execration against those that had done these ruthless deeds.

All the rough kindnesses that the soldiers could bestow were lavished on the survivor; they formed a soft bed of leaves for her to repose on, and rolled up coats for her head, covering her carefully, to shelter her from the dew, which had now begun to fall. She was conscious of what they were doing, but so feeble that she could only moan. An open clasp knife was found firmly clutched in her hand, and

If the rage of the soldiers was fierce when they discovered the murdered negroes, now at the sight of these two white men, stricken in years, so barbarously mangled, it kindled into a perfect fury. Several of them were Catholics, and they were doubly incensed, for it seemed as if the two old men had been murdered at the foot of the altar. They bore them out, laid them under the trees, and covered them over with plantain leaves.

The search was resumed, but they found no more traces of any human bodies.

This, then, was Rosalie's charming boudoir, and the mangled bodies those of her father and Marguerite's kind old uncle; but Marguerite and Rosalie, where were they? Of them there were no traces.

The tremendous rain and the trampling of the soldiers' feet had obliterated all marks about the entrance.

All this was reported to Arthur, who was still standing near the well. He followed Sergeant Owens almost mechanically to the spot

where the two bodies were lying under the trees. The sergeant removed the plantain leaves that covered their faces. The young officer recognised them in a moment, disfigured as they were.

His thirst for vengeance became a raging fever.

"Anything more, have you anything more to show me, sergeant?" he said in a subdued voice, almost in a whisper, as if he were afraid the corpses should hear it, though his eyes flashed fire, and his pale face, usually so placid, had assumed an expression of sternness nearly atrocious.

"No, Sir, we have searched the ruins carefully, and we can find no other bodies. But yes, Sir, these poor men have been murdered—tragically, brutally murdered;" and the sergeant paused as if waiting for some remark from his captain.

"No women, sergeant, no women, white women I mean."

"No, Sir, there are no traces of any females."

"My God! what can have become of them?"

"Here, Sir, this way, Sir, see what we have found," said a soldier running up to Arthur.

"What is it, Martin?"

"We did not like to touch it till you came, Sir."

Arthur followed the man across the lawn. What were his thoughts? what did he expect to find? Beyond the blooming hedge of Barbadoes pride, where the approach to the house from the northern parts of the island came winding up the steep and broken hill, the soldier stopped and showed Arthur what he had found. Several soldiers were congregated round it, and were debating on what it meant. It was an arrow fitted in a cleft-stick driven into the ground, with its head pointing down the path towards the sea. It was a short arrow formed of a reed tipped with copper, and feathered with a seagull's wing.

"It's the same as them dark chaps carries in

a box on their backs," said one from the region of Cockney land.

"Hout, mon—dinna ye ken a it's just an arrie; but wha stickit it there?" replied one from north of the Tweed.

"Why doant thee call it by its roight name, Jock, you're as bad as the Lonnon chap; did'st thee never hear tell of bold Robin Hood?"

"Make way, here comes the Captain," cried one, and the soldiers drew back respectfully.

Arthur Conway examined it carefully. It was the same kind of arrow he had seen in the hands of the Carib Chief. In a moment he guessed the truth. The Caribs had been there, and this was their method of pointing out the direction they had taken.

Darkness however was rapidly stealing over the face of nature. In the tropics, when once the sun is below the horizon, even in the middle of summer, night follows closely on the steps of day. The gorgeous hues of evening, the glowing twilight, soon fade away into dim grey

shadows. They could do nothing till the morning.

In one of the farthest outbuildings, which was evidently a provision store for the slaves, the soldiers had discovered a barrel of salt pork, some heads of Indian corn, a few yams, and a keg of rum. There was plenty of rain water in the troughs. They kindled fires under the mangrove trees, and bivouacked round them, cooking their rashers on the embers. But no rough jokes, no merriment rang round the campfires as of yore. There was a terrible meaning in that silence, foreshadowing what was to come. And the few muttered words were like the first big drops that precede the thunder-storm, falling gloomily and heavily.

Arthur wrapped himself in his cloak, and threw himself on the grass near the fire, worn out, weary, and nearly heart-broken. But for the newly-kindled spirit of vengeance, all his faculties must have yielded before the pressure of misfortune. That spirit of evil, subtle and

malignant, had crept into his heart, and nestled there.

Revenge had mastered Misery.

And yet he slept long and soundly, the sleep of utter oblivion. He was awakened by Sergeant Owens' bringing him a piece of roasted yam, and a rasher of pork, to break his fast.

"Sorry, Sir," said the sergeant, "but we couldn't get you anything better; the niggers have gutted everything."

Arthur started up. It was grey morning. He felt refreshed, but giddy and confused.

"Thank you, Owens, thank you," he said. "I cannot eat yet. How have the men passed the night?"

"Very well, Sir, They've had their breakfast, and are ready to start. Indeed, Sir, they are very impatient—I may say savage. I never saw the men take on so yet."

"They shall not be disappointed," said Arthur, gloomily, "if we can but track the murderers, Owens. Let them fall in."

"But won't you eat anything, Sir?"

"No, no; by-and-by, perhaps; after —" and here he shuddered and turned pale, but shaking off, with a strong effort, his gloomy thoughts, he crossed the lawn to where the arrow rested in the cleft stick.

Telling the men to keep a good look-out, and taking the sergeant, who was a light, active man, keen, intelligent, and trustworthy, with him, he followed the track indicated by the arrow, until they came down nearly to La Maison Vide. Here the path divided, one branch leading straight to the sea, the other northwards. An arrow was discovered pointing in the latter direction. Without any hesitation, Arthur decided on following. For some miles there was no difficulty in keeping the track, for it wound amidst deep glens, whose abrupt cliffs were clothed with an impenetrable mass of tangled forest, but at last emerging from a portal of frowning rocks, a deep and considerable stream, with woody banks, covered with stunted mangroves and manchineals, ran before them.

As they were searching for a ford to cross the river, a man rose suddenly, as if out of the ground, and stood before the young officer. It was the Carib, called El Duque.

"The English Captain seeks the negroes. It is well. The Carib will lead him."

"The English Captain is grateful," replied Arthur. "He saw the arrow, and understood it. Are the murdering negroes far away?"

"They are well hidden, but the Carib's eyes are keen. He can see far. The Carib has patience—he can wait. The negroes are swine, they leave a broad mark. See!" and El Duque led him to the stream, and then some distance up its bank.

"The stream was filled from the thunder-storm; they would not cross; they thought the rain would wash out their tracks; but the mangroves catch the water. The prints remain!"

"They are numerous, then," said the young officer, examining the foot-prints of many men on the soft sand amidst the bushes.

The Carib looked at the soldiers before he replied, and then expressed, as well as he could, that the negroes were about the same number.

No European could possibly have followed the trail of the negroes through the maze of man-groves, over the forest-clad hills, through valley, ravine, and water-courses ; but the Carib tracked them with instinctive sagacity, like a Cuba bloodhound. The soldiers, encumbered with their arms, followed with great difficulty, but, animated with a fierce spirit of revenge, they pressed on gallantly, and kept up as well as they could.

Arthur and the Carib were a little in advance, and had gained the brow of a considerable hill, the crest of which was bare of shrubs, in comparison with the rest.

"Hist!" said the Carib, suddenly.

"What is it?"

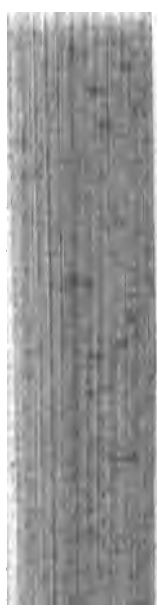
"The Carib smells the drunken hogs. Look!"

A slender blue wreath of smoke, at a dis-

tance below them, was curling upwards into the still air. The negroes were in a deep dell, about fifty yards across, and a hundred in length; water had evidently once lodged there, for it was shaped like an oblong basin, with a dry water-course at both ends. The bed was carpetted with soft, green grass, dotted with a few shrubs, but the nearly perpendicular sides and edges were, as usual, clothed with vegetation, except where the water-course issued from it.

El Duque, beckoning to Arthur to follow his example, crept on his belly to the brink, and pushing aside the boughs, they beheld a scene such as few have witnessed.—A drunken orgie of runaway negroes. A whole ox was roasting at a huge fire, from which, ever and anon, the negroes cut half-raw slices, and thrust them into their huge mouths; bottles of wine and earthen jars were lying scattered about, mingled with costly articles of furniture. In one corner, horses and mules were tethered by the leg, in another, was lying a pile of arms, many of the

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silk scarves and handkerchiefs to their woolly scalps like turbans, great pieces of velvet, chintz hangings, and dresses were twined and festooned about their bodies, and hung over their shoulders, were knocking off the heads of the guests, pouring sparkling champagne and down their throats; others had great goblets and vases to their mouths, and with the most costly and precious wines were yelling and shouting in a state of intoxication; others lay stupified on the ground; one had placed a cushion on his head as a helmet; another had a pipe of tobacco on a golden salver. The jabbering and discordant yelling.

horror and prevented any sense of the
us from mingling with disgust.

se, then, were the plunderers, the burners
Belle Etoile; these were they who had
red its inmates: there could be no mis-
doubt. The evidence was too apparent.

for retaliation, and vengeance. But
and Marguerite, where were they?
sight of the goblets, the different articles
nature, which he recognized, steeled
s heart against mercy, his only fear was
he should escape. Sickened with the
scene, he withdrew gently with the
om the edge of the glen to where the
were halted.

es the English Captain know the hawk's
?" said the Carib in a low tone.

ur nodded his head.

s well. Will the Captain wait till he
;?"

ur nodded again, he could hardly trust
to speak.

"It is well," reiterated the Carib. Then going down the line, he touched about twenty of the soldiers, and expressed by signs that they were to come with him. The men looked to Arthur for his command. He beckoned to Sergeant Owens, and pointed to the men, and then to the Carib. The soldiers fell out noiselessly, and El Duque led them away by a circuitous path. The young officer again beckoned to a corporal, and whispered to him to go round and tell the men to load with as little noise as possible, one by one, to fix their bayonets, and keep silence. There was a deadly purport in that order, and the men understood it; and more than one observed, that they had never seen their young Captain look so before.

As soon as the men were ready, he led them gently down to where the watercourse issued from the glen, and motioned them to spread to the right and left, keeping ten men with him to occupy the narrow end. Presently some of the soldiers caught sight of the negroes,

and a low murmur of execration, that they could not entirely suppress, went round; but the orgie was at its height. The savage band heard not their coming fate. The soldiers' firelocks were cocked spontaneously, and their hands itched to pull the triggers, as each man picked out his mark: they could hardly wait for the word of command.

Suddenly, from the heights at the further end of the glen, a hawk screamed shrilly.

Some of the negroes started up, and rushed to their arms; some stared about in wild dismay, some jumped up, but fell down again, too drunk to stand, while a discordant yell arose on every side.

Hark! a ringing volley of musketry—another, one echoing the other. Down drop about a dozen, screaming, yelling fiends, ere the two echoes have died away.

Bewildered, stupified, they run hither and thither; some, not all, for about twenty have snatched up muskets, and are attempting to return the fire in the direction of the sounds.

Again! hark! the double volley. More yelling, more screaming. Down they go to earth. Another and another. The valley is becoming a shambles. Have the soldiers ~~no~~ pity? Has Arthur forgotten mercy? No! Hark! his clear voice rings above the din like a bugle call, as he gives the word to ~~cease~~ firing, and to close.

The men obeyed reluctantly at heart, but with a quick run.

"Follow me, and charge; but give quarter and take prisoners; we have punished them enough."

Then drawing his sword, and placing himself at the head of his men, he rushed up the watercourse.

Down, at the same moment, from the head of the glen, sprang Sergeant Owens and his party. "The cold steel! my fine fellows," he cried; "don't waste your powder on the murderous dogs."

"Quarter," cried Arthur, "give quarter." And his voice echoed round.

The sound was scarcely out of his mouth, when a straggling bullet from the still resisting body of negroes struck him in the shoulder. He stumbled, and fell forwards on his face. He supported himself on his arm, as one of the men stooped to raise him, and said, faintly, "It is nothing;" but with a groan he fell back senseless and inanimate. The soldier who had stopped to pick him up dropped by his side with a bullet through his brain.

A cry went forth from the soldiers, a fierce cry of rage, when they saw their gallant young Captain fall. That cry was the negroes' knell.

On rushed the two waves of men meeting at a point, forcing in their resistless sweep, the armed negroes against the steep side of the glen. The bayonets flashed brightly, but in a moment they were dim with blood. Another soldier fell mortally wounded, another dead. But the negroes had no chance; badly armed, and taken by surprise; out-numbered

by men who knew how to use their weapons. They were infuriated and exasperated.

Still they behaved manfully. No quarter was given, or asked. They perished where they stood, each one with his arms in his hand fighting to the last. It is probable, that a few of them escaped into the bush, though nothing more was heard of them afterwards. By this act of severity, and the defeat of the republicans, the rebellion was suppressed for a time to break out again in '98 with different results.

CHAPTER XI.

THE 27th of July.—Again the middle ground.

The dim moonlight, moving to and fro, are many dusky forms. Three men are standing out, conversing eagerly; one of gigantic build, armed to the teeth—the mulatto, Leontin; the other two, what a contrast!—the one, pale, stooping Jesuit, and the dusky effeminate—a young quadroon, with purple eyes, curly jet-black hair, straight nose, and pearly teeth, handsome as the demigod, and soulless as the marble.

“See, the stars are waning fast, the day will soon break, and he is not returned,” said the

mulatto, impatiently. "What, in the devil's name, made you send a decrepid old nigger on such an errand?"

"Nobody would take old Pierrot for a spy, Lemantin," replied Marinier, quietly. "Something must have happened, or he would have been back before this. Perhaps it is a false alarm, after all, and the republican troops have not landed."

"True or false," said the mulatto, grinding his teeth together, fiercely, "I will wait no longer. Let the wolves fight it out or not, as they please. Lemantin is no longer the cur waiting for the bone. See, old man, I have got my pack about me, ready and willing for the work. I will hunt for myself. Once they have tasted blood, they are mine for ever. Let us on, then. Why should we delay?"

"I do not wish to detain you," replied the Jesuit, slowly; "but you will keep your compact with me, will you not? I cannot appear in this business; I am a man of peace."

"*Tonnerre de Dieu !* have I not given you my word already? Do you think that I break it, like you white hypocrites?"

"No, no, it is not that, but—" said the Jesuit, hesitatingly.

"Speak out!" cried the mulatto, fiercely.

"Do you think you will have power to control your men, when their blood is inflamed with rapine and plunder? If the lily is bruised, she is worthless."

"Ho! ho!" laughed the savage, "I understand your fears. Trouble yourself not. I will bear her pure and spotless to your arms. Antoine here knows the rendezvous in the mountains; he will guide you there. I will make short work of it where I am going, and will not be long after you. Do you have everything ready. But mind, I swear to you, I, Lemantin, that I will have but little of the mummery for myself. If the dark-haired one refuses it as a sacrament, she shall have it as a horse is physicked, whether she will or no. The other I do not interfere with."

"Oh, Antoine knows the happiness in store for him; a pretty, blushing, blue-eyed bride, fair and fragrant as a lime-blossom," said the Jesuit, turning to the dusky Antinous.

The handsome quadroon smacked his lips and rolled his eyes, but did not speak.

"So, after all, you are not going to marry her yourself?" said the mulatto, laughing.

"No, no, Antoine; here is my substitute."

"I don't understand what you would be at; but as I have said, so will I do," replied Lemantin, shrugging his shoulders. "Hark! hark! there is a shot—another, another. They are attacking the pass. Here, follow me, my dogs," said the mulatto, springing away, but for a moment, as if a sudden thought had struck him, he turned round, and, casting a withering, threatening glance at the Jesuit, he muttered between his set teeth: "Treacherous dog! Fool that I was to trust a white man!" Then, calling to two of his followers, he ordered them, in a tongue unknown to the Jesuit, to keep the white man prisoner, until his return.

Marinier understood the action, but did not attempt to expostulate: he was himself alarmed. Had any one betrayed them? Had any one discovered the plot? The Carib—old Pierrot—if it failed, it would go hard with him. The mulatto's blood was up. He had aroused the innate ferocity of the beast—would it turn upon him, and rend him?

The firing suddenly ceased, and the mulatto stopped.

A negro came rushing up the ravine.

"What is it, Sully," cried Lemantin, aloud.

"Bah, it is noting, mon General," replied in broken English the panting man, with a rough salute. "Trois Caraibes, four vat dey call militia, and one buckra sodger, dat all—we shot um down, dey run away, tree kill."

"Are you quite sure they were militia men, Sully?"

"Ees, Massa, dey run away quite too soon for buckra sodgers, besides him all dress in white."

"Did you take any prisoners?"

"No, General; mash um kulls, all go ~~dead~~ dead."

The rebel Chief, for so we may now call him ~~reflected~~, reflected a moment, and then said:

"That will do, Sully, go back and tell Captain Meunier to draw off his men in a quarter of an hour, and march towards La Belle Etoile."

The negro giving a rough salute disappeared.

"Ha! this speaks for itself," muttered the mulatto, with a grim smile. "The troops have marched to meet the Frenchmen, and they could spare but eight—curses on them: may they cut one another's throats, the pale-faced curs. Come, these eight are disposed of, the coast is clear, and the proud Rosalie is mine."

"Well, brother," he said aloud, turning to Marinier and holding out his big hand, yet showing his huge white teeth with a fiendish grin, "there is no treachery in this, after all—shake hands, brother."

Marinier did as he was desired, at the same

time fixing his keen eyes on the mulatto, he said :

“ Why did you suspect me, brother ? ”

“ *Diantre!* I suspect you above all men, what could have put that into your head ? ”

“ You looked just now as if you could have eaten me.”

“ Bah, it was but a passing cloud—old Pierrot has not returned. I did not know what the firing was about, and I was afraid for the moment that our plans were discovered ; but it’s all right I tell you.”

“ What was the alarm, then ? why did they make such a noise ? the quieter these things are done the better.”

“ It was a foolish attempt of a few men who attempted to force the pass, intending no doubt to act as garrison to La Belle Etoile during the boy’s absence ; do you understand ? ”

“ And the issue.”

“ All shot down, or run away.”

"Were there any Caribs amongst them?" asked Marinier, anxiously.

The mulatto's sleepy eye flashed fire, and a deep black shadow seemed to pass over his swarthy countenance as he turned away with a fearful oath, without replying to the Jesuit's question.

* * * *

Three hours after this, the smooth lawn in front of La Belle Etoile was trodden down and polluted by a throng of incarnate fiends, inflamed with bad passions, and furious for blood.

The helpless and unsuspecting inmates were busily employed in their usual avocations.

The slaves were not in the fields, but were scattered about the farm and outbuildings, drawing water, grinding corn, or tending the cattle.

Rosalie and Marguerite had risen early—it was an anxious day to both of them, and sleep had forsaken them before the usual time. They

went hand in hand to pay their orisons before the beautiful shrine in Rosalie's boudoir.

Both their hearts were touched with sadness ; yet even that had its consolation, for it linked and united them in stronger bonds of sisterhood.

Picture to yourself, kind reader, these two fair beings adorned with every grace and beauty, radiant with youth and purity, differing only as the loveliest flowers, the brightest gems, or two fair stars, kneeling together, side by side, sisters in all, save blood, each supplicating at that ornamented shrine the intercession of the Virgin of grace before the throne of heaven, each for him each loved. The dark, lustrous eyes of one are upturned to heaven beseechingly—her head thrown back, her lips gently parted, her bosom heaving with convulsive sobs. The other, with her soft, blue eyes humbly bent upon the ground, the long, silky eyelashes casting a shadow on her fair, smooth cheek, while from underneath comes creeping gently

a single tear. Their white hands clasped together, their kneeling attitude, their whole expression was beautiful and pure and holy, and peering at them through the half-closed jealousies, like a furious satyr, stands the mulatto Lemantin.

Rosalie and her sister arose from their kneeling posture and kissed one another tenderly.

The mulatto passed round to the outer door of the boudoir, followed by a tall, athletic negro.

"Hark," said Marguerite, hastily, "surely I heard footsteps outside, and there, look, is the shadow of a man passing the window."

"Fancy, dearest, it must be fancy: the slaves are not allowed to go by this end of the house," replied Rosalie, laughing.

"No, no," cried Marguerite, in alarm. "Hark! what is that?"

Suddenly, around the house, and in the house, there arose an infernal uproar. Shrieks,

yells, cries, the rattling of fire-arms, the crashing of wood, the bursting open of doors, hurried footsteps, heart-rending ear-piercing screams, hellish shouts, as if the very fiends had broken loose. The door leading into the body of the house is opened suddenly—but it is not shut again—there is no time.

Faint, and ghastly pale, old Devrien, with his dressing-gown, all dabbled with blood, that spurted from a wound in his side, tottered into the room,

“Fly, dear ones—fly! while there is yet time!” he murmured, in a low, gasping voice pressing his hand to his side. “The negroes have risen! Oh, my God! Mercy—mercy! Spare them! Fly!—fly!”

He could say no more, but, staggering forwards, he fell senseless at the foot of the crucifix.

Pale as death, Rosalie ran to raise her father, but a scream from Marguerite stopped her. Hideous fiends, grinning and yelling, were thronging into the room.

Instinctively they turned to fly by the door that opened out beneath the gigantic mangrove trees.

They reached the threshold. There stood the mulatto, Lemantin.

Rosalie started back, horror-stricken.

Fearfully the truth flashed upon her, and scorched her brain. Lost—lost !

“The mulatto—the mulatto !” she shrieked wildly, and fell fainting forwards. He caught her in his arms.

At the same moment, a powerful negro seized the no less terrified Marguerite, and, despite her cries and struggles, bore her off like child.

We will not lift up the dismal shroud of hideous horrors that enveloped La Belle Etoile on that fatal morning.

They who have read an account of the Maroon wars may easily conceive them, and to those who have not, the scenes that the soldiers witnessed in the last chapter may furnish some idea of the fate that awaited alike master and slave,

young and old, things animate and inanimate.

Rapine and murder, fire and reckless destruction, plunder, wanton cruelty, and hideous drunkenness had a fearful orgie, and this not under the excitement of a resistance—for resistance there was none. Pshaw! the blood runs cold, and the senses sicken at the very thought. Our business is with those that still live. Let us then follow them.

Beneath the gnarled, wide-spreading branches of the mangrove trees, apart from the plunderers, stood five picked followers of the rebel chief. They were unarmed, and held by the bridles two mules, ready saddled. The mulatto and the negro, bearing their lovely burdens, soon joined this party, but kept the maidens separate.

Rosalie was still senseless, or appeared to be so; but Marguerite shuddered when she was placed on the ground. On this very spot, beneath the sheltering branches of that grim old tree, but the day before, she had reclined trustfully on

the bosom of him she loved with her ~~mar~~
love. 'Twas there the Carib Chief stood
'twas there they had parted. And now !
this was but a passing thought. She collected
her wandering senses, and prayed silently
heaven for aid.

She was puzzled at the conduct and demeanour
of these men. Could it be their intention to
rescue and preserve them ? She had not under-
stood, or, perhaps, had not heard Rosalie's
exclamation at the sight of the mulatto. She
looked at them all in turns, to see if she could
recognise any of their faces. But no ; they
were all perfect strangers to her. What would
they do next ? As yet, she knew not what to
think, or how to act.

She was not kept long in suspense, for the
same negro who had carried her off again
approached her, and said, in very good French :

"Mademoiselle must allow herself to be
blindfolded."

"Oh, no ! pray do not do so !" she replied,

beseechingly. "Let me have at least the light of day. Do not blind my eyes!"

"It must be done: the chief has ordered it," replied the negro, firmly, but respectfully.

"Which is your chief? Oh! let me speak to him."

"*Le voilà*," said the negro, pointing to the gigantic mulatto.

"What are you about there, Meunier?" shouted the deep voice of Lemantin. "Do as I have ordered you at once, and put her on the mule."

"You see your request is impossible, *Madoiselle*," said the negro, politely. "You must submit." Marguerite permitted herself quietly to be blindfolded.

As soon as the handkerchief was passed over her eyes and fastened, she felt herself lifted on the mule. The reins were put into her hands, and they moved off.

Once more the parting from her dear Arthur crossed her mind. Again it was banished, and she listened attentively to catch all words or

sounds that might assist her in conjecturing their fate. Alas! she could but hear the discordant yells of the now drunken fiends—the dismal screams of the despairing women—the crackling and roaring of the devouring flames—and the shrill cries of animals in extreme torture. Gradually they died away, and she knew by the noiseless tread of the mule that she was passing over the savannah of Guinea grass behind the farm. Then they began to ascend steep hills, threading the tangled forest. Several times the mule stumbled, and she nearly fell, but she found herself supported by vigorous arms. Several times she was lifted from her saddle, and carried by men up some steep hill side, or across some rocky ravine, or foaming mountain torrent. Many times the leaves and twigs of the overhanging boughs and trailing creepers would brush against her face, and repeatedly a voice cried “Stoop!” but no other word was spoken, except occasionally a muttered oath.

Their progress, however, as may be sup-

posed, was very slow; to poor Marguerite it seemed an age. A weary—wearied ride it was to her, in the possession of all her senses. Of Rosalie's feelings we know nothing, for she remembered nothing of this journey.

* * * * *

"Here we are at last," suddenly cried out the ferocious Lemantin.

The mules stopped, and the exhausted and frightened maidens were lifted off their backs, and placed on the soft and mossy ground.

Rosalie's courage had completely failed her; she was almost deprived of sense, and yet she trembled violently, and could scarcely stand, but Marguerite still had hope; her faith was so pure, her trust so entire, that she almost looked for a special intervention of Providence to rescue them from the impending danger. What that danger was, her maiden heart would not, could not imagine. Death was in her thoughts; it was terrible for one so young, so lovely, to die;

but her soul was at peace with God, she dreamed not of dishonour. The bandages were removed from their eyes. Rosalie uttered a faint scream, and sank senseless on the ground.

Marguerite was at first bewildered by the sudden glare of the bright day ; but soon, though pale as death, and quivering like an aspen leaf, she looked steadily round, as if to gather in by one glance the whole scene.

All was mystery.

Then she sat down, and raising the drooping head of the lovely creole, chafed her temples, and tried every means to bring her back to life.

The scene was, indeed, a strange one ; although to any but the actors in this painful drama, the spot chosen by Lemantin for the fulfilment of his dark designs was a tropical gem of the purest water.

About twelve feet apart, there stood two stately grougrou palm-trees, casting their waving tresses loosely into the fragrant air. Sheltered

and protected by their singular position, they had withstood for many years the awful power of the devastating hurricanes, and grown tall, straight, and tapering, until they had by far out-topped their brethren of the forest.

A little retired, but still between the two palm trees, so that their trunks appeared to rise as columns on each side, there was a rock, somewhat like a dais, with a projecting canopy. The face was smooth, and two ledges or steps, one above the other, stood out from it, the lowest resting on the ground. It was of dark-green porphyry, polished by nature or the action of water. The brow was slightly overhanging, and clothed with trailing creepers, twined and matted together.

A deep, dark shadow fell from this rock upon the emerald-green turf, whilst the still-slanting sun rays played and coquetted with the feathery foliage of the lofty palm-trees, which, as it swayed about in the light air, threw alternate lights and shades on the richly-coloured trunks.

On one side, a jet of pure, cold, limpid water gushed forth impetuously from a narrow cleft in the bosom of the hard rock, which, falling into a rounded basin, filled it constantly to overflowing. At first, a trickling rill stealing through the moss—then forming a water-course as the ground sloped gently away, it ran, bubbling and sparkling, over rounded and glossy stones for a little distance, when suddenly it was lost amidst a brake of lofty rushes, canes, and waving reeds.

Behind the screen of water-plants which faced the rock, might be dimly seen the peak of one of the highest mountains of the central group, on which there rested a light gaudy-like cloud surrounded with rays of gold, while a mazarine blue haze spread veil-like along its sides. To the left, backed by the dense and impenetrable forest, there was a mass of brilliant vegetation, amidst which the tree-ferns shone conspicuously. The grass-plot on which the palm-trees stood, might measure some twenty or thirty square yards.

Grouped round the two maidens, but at a little distance from them, were Lemantin and his savage companions. Upon the second ledge of the rock there was erected a rude cross of wood. A white man in the garb of a priest knelt on the lowest step. By his side stood, in the natural and graceful attitude of a savage, a handsome young quadroon. God-like as he looked he did but suck a piece of sugar-cane.

When the party arrived the man in the dress of a priest arose, and making a sign to the mutto he walked up to the two maidens, and said in a low voice :

“Daughter !”

Marguerite looked up, and to her great surprise she beheld a white man in a priest's robe, gazing compassionately on them. A fresh ray of hope, like a rosy sunbeam, gleamed upon her and warmed her sinking heart.

“Are you come to save us ?” she murmured, in a gentle voice.

The man shook his head sorrowfully, and replied :

" Alas ! I am but a prisoner, like yourselves, to these lawless men."

" What do they want ? why have they brought us here ? what means that rude altar ? and you, why are you in the garb of a minister of our holy religion ?" said Marguerite with rapid utterance.

" It is evident that these men must have arranged it all beforehand, and they carried me forcibly off in my priest's dress to perform the ceremony."

" What ceremony ? I do not understand you," cried the bewildered girl.

" The sacrament of marriage, my daughter," replied the priest, slowly

" But the bridegrooms, where are they ?"

" There and there," answered the man, pointing to Lemantin and the young quad-roon.

“And the brides?”

“Yourself and Rosalie Devrien.”

A deep, burning blush overspread the maiden's face, as in a moment the purport of his words rent the veil of innocence that had hitherto enveloped her young heart. She did not, however, shrink from her terrible task, nor did her powers of observation desert her.

“You know us, then?” she said, quickly.

“I have seen you but once before,” replied the priest, while a strange sort of smile for a moment flickered round his thin pale lips.

“You know we are wealthy—will they not take a ransom for us? We will give all we possess—ay, and more”—and here she blushed again, for she thought of Arthur—“if they will let us go free.”

“See, here is a purse of gold,” said Rosalie, looking up for the first time; “and here are jewels, and bracelets, and —”

"I fear it is vain," replied the priest, interrupting her. "Ambition, not avarice, prompts these men; or they would have shared in the plunder of La Belle Etoile."

Marguerite looked at the priest attentively, when he had said this; a faint glimmering of suspicion stealing almost imperceptibly upon her.

"You have heard, then —" she paused, and ~~her~~ ^{her} ~~eyes~~ ^{eyes} ~~fell~~ ^{fell} ~~on~~ ^{on} ~~her~~ ^{her} ~~tears~~ ^{tears}.

Martier saw his mistake, and hastened to rectify it. "Abs! I could not help hearing it. The men who brought me hither did nothing but talk of it. They spoke in French, certainly, and did not reflect that I am a Frenchman."

"But surely," said Marguerite, quickly, "if you are a father of our Holy Church, as you profess to be, you will speak to these horrid men, and save us."

"It will be of little avail, my daughter, for

peak to them; at least, I fear so, for
prisoner in their hands, like your-

profession is sacred. Savages as
they will listen to you."

father; in the name of the Virgin of
implore you, try," said Rosalie, faintly.
riest shook his head, sorrowfully; but
ed them, and went over to Lemantin,
standing a little apart, grinning like

," said the mulatto, abruptly, "do
ent, or must the dose be forced upon

have not consented, Lemantin; but
ot yet had time to convince them of
sity of compliance. They have maidens'
to be overcome, and they scarcely know
native."

r blood is cold, Marinier; mine is
ike wildfire in my veins. I tell you
it but little longer."

"You must have a little patience, Lemant. The first—yes! not your girl, I mean—has not yet recovered from her dancing-fit. I tell you she will not be able to bear another shock so soon."

The mulatto looked savage.

"I speak for your benefit, Lemantin," continued Martinet. "For my part, I care not how soon the great creek becomes your wife. It is with the fair-haired one I have to deal, and that the matter is lost to me if force is to be used."

"Look you," replied the mulatto, interrupting him. "the simonies still fall from the rocks towards the west: but in a short time there will be no simonies, and then— You understand me?"

"Carry her off then, Lemantin, to the rendezvous and leave the other to me."

"I do not pretend to understand what you would be at with your snake-like subtlety,"

said the mulatto, contemptuously. "To your work; the shadows are fast shortening."

Lemantin walked backwards and forwards, like a wild beast in his cage waiting for its food, impatiently, savagely, grinding his teeth, and knitting his brows together.

Marinier returned to the weeping maidens: "I cannot save you," said he, mournfully; "my efforts have been all in vain. I promised them a vast ransom to tempt their cupidity; I pointed out the heinous sin they were committing; I told the Chief you would die, if he persisted in his cruel determination; but it was in vain."

The maidens shuddered.

"All I could gain for you," he continued, in a soft, insinuating voice, "was a short delay, and a promise not to use any violence, if it can possibly be avoided."

"There is some object in this," said Marguerite, quickly.

“ Yes, if I understand them rightly, it is this,” replied Marinier, in the same soft voice: “ these men are far above their brethren in education and intellect ; they have lately heard the doctrine preached, that all men are born, and should be, equal. Now, they are wise enough to see the fallacy of this, in their present state. They know that no coloured men have ever acquired the intellects and knowledge of white men, as a body—they know this, and they feel it deeply. They are out of the pale of society ; they cannot aspire to the hands of the daughters of their masters and superiors : they would remedy this. These men, then, avoiding the horrors and atrocities of their inferior brethren, have carried you safely off from certain death, and more certain outrage, to elevate themselves by marriage, and to raise up children to succeed them, who shall not be disgraced and branded as inferior beings. This, as far as I can make it out, has been their object, both in preserving you from a dreadful

fate, and of bringing me here by force, to perform the holy sacrament."

Marguerite listened attentively. Her faint suspicion became a strong doubt. She looked at him keenly, and said: "Surely you can and will refuse to perform so holy a rite; and that will gain us time, at least if their intentions be such as you say they are."

"If I refuse, they will kill me."

"And is it not better to die," said Marguerite, solemnly, "than to commit so deadly a sin?"

"Nay, my daughter, our life is not our own; we hold it as a tenure from God. He must release us, not we ourselves. No situation, however painful or distressing, can excuse suicide in His eyes."

"You, then, would have us rather marry these men than die? Oh, shame! shame! to linger on, under the binding of a sacred oath, linked like a galley-slave to a fierce and cruel savage—a negro!" Here a convulsive shudder

passed over her. "Sooner welcome death, in his most hideous shape!"

"Nay, my daughter, you are hasty; no oath is binding that is taken under the fear of death. In a short time, you may be free, and get absolution from your vow. By this, you have a chance of escape; otherwise, without a miracle, there is none."

"And in the meantime?" added Marguerite, shuddering again.

Ere the Jesuit could reply, the sun was in the meridian.

"No more of this mummary, Marinier," shouted the mulatto, savagely. "How long are you to stand prating there?"

As Lemantin pronounced the name "Marinier," the hearts of the forlorn maidens finally sank within them; the last faint glimmering of hope seemed suddenly and irrevocably darkened now and for ever! They looked at one another: all was agony and miserable despair.

"It is *his* enemy," murmured Marguerite.

Then kissing the scarcely-conscious Rosalie, she said: "Sister, dear sister, farewell. We shall meet in heaven, ere long. Let us forgive our enemies: let us pray."

"O, Marguerite! this is very terrible. Is there no hope?"

"On earth, none. O, Arthur! Arthur!"

And they knelt together, side by side, and prayed.

The last second of the reprieve has passed; the shadows are falling towards the east. Inflamed with passion, furious at the delay, with burning eyes and heaving chest, the gigantic mulatto sprang forwards to seize upon his beautiful and helpless victim.

Rosalie saw him. With superhuman energy, she arose, and, with a piercing shriek, darted forwards towards the screen of water-plants, in a vain attempt to fly. Soon her limbs failed her, and she sank to the earth.

With a curse, the mulatto turned, and sprang after her with rapid bounds.

He has almost reached her.

Hark !

Through the still calm air, there comes a swift, low, rustling, hurtling sound.

With a hoarse, terrible scream, the gigantic mulatto bounded full four feet into the air, and fell forwards on his face close to the feet of the shrinking girl.

It seemed as if the avenging hand had indeed been stretched out to strike him with the bolt of heaven. So suddenly passed he away, that there was no perceptible interval 'twixt life and death.

Marguerite, who had risen again, fell on her knees before the altar. She could but murmur :
" Saved ! saved ! saved ! "

The young quadroon, and the others, ran simultaneously to raise the fallen giant. A yell, a fiendish shriek, burst from every throat as they discovered the cause of his death.

An arrow, feathered with a quill from the wing of a white seamew, had pierced his right eye, and entered the brain.

They let the body fall.

Again arose the yell of terror.

The Caribs! the Caribs!

They stood irresolute.

A hawk screamed shrilly.

Then one by one, the negroes, the mulattoes, the quadroon, dropped down, some pierced with many arrows, some with the deadly bullets.

There was a strange sound, a commotion in the air, it seemed alive with missiles, whilst from every side the echoes from the deadly muskets pealed a death knell to the wretched negroes.

Like a ship in the vortex of a hurricane, they were hurled hither and thither. They could not escape, for around them was drawn a circle of death.

Wherever they attempted to fly, there they were met with the arrow or the bullet.

But not until the last negro was stretched, quivering and bleeding, on the mossy ground, did any of the death-dealers show them-

selves, and then, a single, half-naked, ~~b~~ graceful figure, with a bow in his hand, ~~and~~ an arrow fitted to the string, walked slowly ~~and~~ gravely from amidst the canes; and passing through the slain, without moving his eyes to the right or left, but carefully avoiding the corpses, so as not even to brush them with his feet, he went up to Marinier, who, though unhurt, stood motionless and petrified (indeed, he seemed rooted to the ground), and placing his hand on the Jesuit's shoulder, he said, in a firm and somewhat menacing tone: "My brother must not leave this, or Le Baron will tell his Caribs that Marinier is an enemy."

Marinier answered, moodily and sulkily:

"Kill me at once, Carib; life is no longer valuable to me. My scheme has failed, and I am lost. Better die by your hands, than be hanged like a dog, with my enemy triumphing over me."

The Carib Chief replied, gravely:

"Marinier belongs to the English Captain. Le

baron will keep him safely. Marinier must not lie."

"Maledictions on you," muttered the priest, savagely. "Foiled! foiled, not once, but again, by this miserable savage. What an accursed fatality!"

But this mood did not continue long; quickly banishing the idea of death, he began to reflect.

A sudden light beamed in his eyes, a slight colour tinged his pale cheeks, and he muttered to himself these words: "One more cast of the dice. I will stake all upon the throw. It is a good thought—a last chance, but a favourable one." Then speaking aloud, he said: "You need not bind me, Carib. I will go as your prisoner willingly. I am sick of these scenes of bloodshed."

CHAPTER XII.

WHEN Le Blanc recovered his senses, *ne*
found himself in a comfortable bed, with *mos*
quito curtains drawn round. His wounds *had*
been washed and dressed, and owing probab*ly*
to the exhaustion occasioned by loss of bloo*d*
and want of food, no fever had supervene*d*.
With the exception of one arm, which he *felt*
was helpless, and which gave him a little pain, in
every other respect he was sensible that he had re-
ceived no serious injury to his person, though,
on first awakening, he was sorely puzzled to
know where he had got to. The fresh trade-

I came sighing through the waving plantain
es, bearing on its wings the perfume of lime
orange blossoms ; and the dash of sounding
ws, mingled with the flapping of leaves
ast the closed jalousies, perplexed him more
more.

ipe fruit and cooling drinks stood on a
e by his bedside. The sheets were of
vy whiteness ; the curtains, of the finest
ze. Everything bespoke luxury and civili-
on.

The pain in his arm, however, convinced him
; all was real ; that what he saw and felt
not the effect of disordered senses. " Where
I ? " he said aloud.

" Did your honour call ? " answered the voice
ur friend, Tom Connolly, from the verandah ;
re he had been enjoying a quiet pipe, watch-
the lizards catching the unsuspecting flies,
out a care or a thought of the future ; but
ig at the call, and entering the chamber.

Does your honour want anything ? I'm

ordered to get you what your honour wishes for," said the soldier, with a salute.

"Where am I, my good fellow?" said Le Blanc, faintly.

"In a house—devil the less, with a good roof over your head, begging your honour's pardon, if I make too free," replied Tom Connolly, "with lashins of drink, and nothing to pay."

"But what house am I in?"

"Devil a know I know, your honour, barring that you're kindly welcome. They're decent people, and don't stint a boy in his drink: but if your honour'll wait a bit, I'll find out," and the kind-hearted Irishman rushed out of the room.

"Ah! I remember all now," murmured Le Blanc. "Defeated, betrayed, a prisoner on parole, deprived of liberty, deceived on every side, disappointed of the promised reinforcements, cheated by the settlers, cheated by the negroes, cheated by the Caribs; how shall I

face Victor Hugues again?" He cursed his folly for having embarked in such an enterprise; it was a miserable failure, and would lower him further in Rosalie's estimation. First, planning and plotting with all sorts of horrible wretches; then, betrayed by his associates, and disgracefully defeated. Then, gradually he began to remember his short interview with Arthur Conway, and how the young officer had expressed a terrible doubt of the safety of his mistress. "Had old Pierrot, too, betrayed him?" Never before had he felt the depth of his love for Rosalie. Then the promise he had made cast a bright ray on his gloomy situation.

His reverie was interrupted by the return of the Irish soldier.

"It's a fine place intirely, and has a grand name; the negroes call it the Carse of Gowrie, and the Master is one Mr. Gordon," said Tom.

"Is Mr. Gordon at home, did you hear? I should like to speak to him."

"The Master's beyant, your honour, with the purty young lady, the colleen dhas, with the sweet blue eyes, that the Captain, God bless him! is so sweet on, and a purtier couple never stood before the altar; shure, didn't I see here onst the darling, recaving the blessed Sacriment like an angel—as she is."

The young Frenchman, though he could not quite understand Tom Connolly's speech, gathered from it, that Mr. Gordon and his niece were on the other side of the island, probably at La Belle Etoile. He began to grow impatient, and inquired of the soldier where Arthur was.

"The Captain's gone, your honour, since yesterday," replied the Irishman; "but there's a party left to take care of the wounded. There's a horse, and Tom Connolly ready, when your honour is well enough, to cross the mountains."

"Why, my fine fellow, you seem altogether to forget that I am a prisoner of war?"

"Shure, you're the Captain's friend."

"But I have only just now been his mortal enemy."

"Well, your honour, I suppose it's the same as in Tipperary. Boys meet boys ; there's a bit of trailing the cotamores ; the alpeens are out in a twinkling. Hurrooh ! a bloody sponce or two ; then, your honour, it's all right again, a fair fight, and no malice."

"And this is one of the men they wanted to seduce from their loyalty ! I wonder whether they are all like him," thought the young Republican, aroused for a moment. But he soon became impatient again, and attempted to rise.

"Your honour is wake as wather. Won't to-morrow do ? The Captain's gone to look after the ladies. Shure, I heard the docther say so ; so, your honour, there's no occasion to tire yourself. Lie still ; take some dhrink, and some soft meat, and I'll call your honour before the sun is up, and we'll have a pleasant ride into the town."

Tom Connolly's advice was good. Anxious as he was to get tidings of his lovely mistress, he felt, that in his weak state, he could do no good if Rosalie were in a perilous position. That there was danger, he had gathered from Arthur's words and manner during their brief interview; but he trusted that all would be well.

Tom Connolly was right. François was, indeed, very weak. Dallas again visited him, and confirmed what the soldier had said.

Perfect quiet was enjoined on the young Frenchman, and to ensure it, a strong opiate was administered by the kind surgeon. His sleep was long and refreshing, yet, when he awoke, he had an indistinct consciousness, that a beautiful female form had been standing by his bed, that a sweet and well-known voice had murmured his name repeatedly in soft and tender accents.

The effects of the anodyne had scarcely

ceased, and there remained a dreamy languor not wholly unpleasing to the senses, but confusing to the ideas.

Surely, there are moments when the most hardened, the most worldly, heart catches some stray gleams of the pure and beautiful. Some through the medium of their senses, unusually gratified, are suddenly startled into a faint glimpse of their reality, and for them there is hope. But when flickering, like the waving streaks of the northern lights, they flash in the fever dreams of night fitfully, inconstantly, and no one knoweth from whence they come, or whither they go, then is hope doubtful, for the morn dawneth, and the dreams are forgotten.

The young Frenchman's mind was singularly constituted. In the midst of irreligion, atheism, blood-guiltiness, fierce passions, war, and tumult, the image of the pure and beautiful, reflected from his youthful fancy, had never completely deserted him; and now

it had simply and singly taken the form of Rosalie.

Thus, when he awoke, and strove to collect his fevered visions into some order, he fancied that an angel had stood by his bedside, inviting him in gentle accents, to fairer regions of peace and happiness.

But the angel had the eyes, and hair, and voice of Rosalie.

"Connolly."

"Coming, yer honour," said Tom, again entering the room.. He had, indeed, been waiting at the door for some time, with curious, but not unintelligent, grin on his broad, good-humoured countenance.

"Is that you, Tom?"

"It's meself, Sir. Is yourself quite asy, Sir, after your long sleep?"

"Have I slept long, then?"

"Is it long?—bedad, thin, them hours were like Irish miles; it took yer honour a power of sleep to git over them."

" Oh, I remember, the doctor gave me opium ; yet I feel much stronger, and I think I shall be able to start to-morrow."

" And sure, Captain, this is to-morrow, and the breakfast bugle's blown."

" Do you mean to say that a night has passed, without my knowing it?"

" Shure, Mr. Dallas is a conjuror, Captain ; but it's as thrue as if St. Pater had tould it. I hope your honour had some purty drhames."

" Has—has there been any one here but yourself—in the room, I mean—whilst I was asleep?"

" I'll tell ye the truth, Sir—there was."

" Was it man or woman, Tom?"

" It wore neither, your honour ; it wore the docther," replied Connolly, the grin growing broader and broader.

" Bah !" said François, impatiently ; " only the surgeon. What strange phantasies opium conjures up ! What strange fancies it puts into the head ! I could almost swear that she was

standing by me, or an angel in her likeness." This, though spoken aloud, was said "apart."

"Begging your honour's pardon, if I make too free," continued the soldier, "I did not say it wore the surgeon. It wore the docther."

"Was it not Mr. Dallas, then?"

"I won't tell your honour a lie. It was not him, at all, at all," replied Connolly, gravely, but with a twinkle of his roguish eye: "it wore a docther in petticoats."

"One of the black nurses, then, I suppose; they are famous bedside watchers."

"Them sort don't wear much petticoats, I'm thinking," said Tom, demurely.

"What do you mean?" cried Le Blanc, his whole expression suddenly brightening.

"Will your honour be good enough to look at the little finger of your right hand?"

The beautiful tracery of the blue veins shone through the pale, smooth skin of his thin, fair hands, so lately stained with blood and dirt, as he raised them to his eyes. Though the room

was darkened, a diamond sparkled where, but the day before, there had been none.

“By heavens!” he exclaimed—he did not swear any longer by liberty—“the fairies or the genii have been at work. Am I, like the Princess of China, to be cured at the sight of a ring? Tell me, my good fellow, was it Mhaimonne who put that ring on my finger?”

“Anan—is it Latin your honour’s speaking?” replied Connolly, with a vacant stare. You would have thought him as innocent as a dove.

“Devil take the fellow! Can’t you tell me how it came here?”

“Sure it wore the docther, and the docther said as how it would cure yer honour entirely, if you would look at it.”

Le Blanc again raised it to his eyes, and now he knew it. Once this ring had encircled the taper finger of a hand whose very touch sent his wild blood circling through his veins. He saw the truth. Rosalie, his Rosalie was safe,

and actually under the same roof. What *J* filled his heart; yet he was humbled and *de*jected by defeat and disgrace, softened and chastened by sickness and misfortunes. And he, the young man in his pride, just now an atheist, a scoffer, a despiser of all religion, turned his face to the wall, and with tears in his eyes thanked Heaven for all its mercies.

And the vision of the pure and beautiful rested on his senses. And for him there is yet hope.

François now became very impatient to see his Rosalie.

He found himself very weak, but with the assistance of Tom Connolly, who was quite proud to act in his new capacity of valet to the Captain's friend, he arose.

The toilette was ready for him—in fact everything was luxurious; and there was a marble bath, through which ran a cool, clear stream of water, and fresh-gathered lime leaves were floating on it.

And now let us fancy him dressed in a suit of white linen, clean and fragrant. His face was rather pale, but his black eyes shone clear and brightly, and the expression of his countenance, generally so bold, impetuous, and sarcastic, was now softened down to a gentle melancholy. The loss of blood, and the freshly-revived feelings of his youth, had deprived him of all that was harsh. The spirit of pride, of self-dependence, of conceit, had vanished. His love, chastened by defeat and affliction, had become more pure, more unselfish. He knew that he had been unworthy of such a being as the good and lovely creole. His future life should make amends for his past unworthiness. He would live for her alone; and now that his compact with Victor Hugues was at an end, he might and would remain as a prisoner on parole at Dominica, and watch over her safety.

It was therefore with a beating, yet hoping, heart that he allowed the soldier to usher him into the presence of his beloved.

Rosalie and Marguerite were seated together with their arms twined round each other's waist.

Linked together by ties such as few women, aliens in blood, can ever know, affection, grief, and suffering had made them more than sisters.

When François entered, Marguerite rose, and left the room by another door. It was rather dark, and he did not see her; but he was at once conscious of the presence of his Rosalie. She too arose, pale, trembling, and with her eyes cast timidly down, went to meet him; but her agitation was so great that she could scarcely stand, and when he caught her in his arms her head sank upon his bosom, and she burst into tears.

"What has happened, my own—my thrice-loved Rosalie?" said François, tenderly, yet somewhat surprised and alarmed at this mournful reception. "What is it? — tell me, dearest."

"O, François!" she faintly murmured.

"Speak, love!—I am listening."

"No—no. I cannot—I cannot. It drives
me mad!"

"Rosalie, if you love me, speak! This sus-
pense is dreadful!"

There was a pause.

"The negroes—the mulatto—the wood!"
she gasped, and at each word she shuddered,
and the shudder vibrated through his frame.
"**F**rançois, it was a hideous dream!"

Her lover looked at her piteously—beseech-
ingly, wishing, yet fearing to hear more.

But she could not—she dare not raise her
face. To encounter his gaze now would have
been death. She did not see the anxious,
piercing, yet mournful look her words—her
manner, had kindled in his eyes. His pale face
had become in a moment frightfully haggard.
The Carib's warning at La Maison Vide had
flashed before him. The words now rang in
his ears. Beware the mulatto, Lemantin! The
negroes! the mulatto! O, God! surely the

mulatto, Lemantin!—Oh, horrible suspicion!
Oh, hideous phantasy! And thus to meet!
Thus to have the cup dashed from his lips!
Thus to find his treasure turned to withered
leaves!

Again a pause. Oh! in a few moments
what tortures may wring the human heart! In
the minutest atom of time, that which eternity
can alone alleviate.

And could Rosalie, in that brief pause, read
his thoughts? Was there a chord vibrating
in her heart from his?

Between two who truly love, are there not
mysterious sympathies? Is there not a con-
sciousness of the presence, though they cannot
see? Is there not an interchange of thoughts,
though both be silent? Answer, ye who love.
She did not raise her face from his bosom, but
murmured, sobbing :

“François, my beloved, we have lost a
father!”

These words, few and sad as they were, re-

assured him. Man's love is selfish, make the best of it that we can. So that when Rosalie accounted for her bitter grief by her father's death, François felt as if a heavy load had been removed from his heart. He kissed her pale forehead, and said, tenderly, and soothingly :

"Do not grieve so, my own, sweet Rosalie ! If you have lost a father, you have found one who loves you as dearly."

"Stay !" said Rosalie, quickly, looking up for the first time, and gently disengaging herself from him. "True, I am an orphan, friendless, and cast upon the world. I love you, and you know it ; but I cannot, I will not, listen to you until—until—" She hesitated, and burst into tears.

"I understand what you would say, dearest Rosalie. But, believe me, I am changed. I have seen the frightful fallacy of our faith. Oceans of blood poured forth at the shrine of Liberty will never propitiate her. Freedom—true and genuine freedom—must be

the work of time, of self-restraint, of virtue— not of the guillotine. O, Rosalie! I am awakened; I see that we have been bowing down to stocks and stones, and, like the idolators of old, shedding man's blood ruthlessly, to get what they cannot give us. Let what has passed be but as a fearful dream, at which we shudder, but know that it is no more. My compact with Victor Hugues is at an end, now and for ever; and I claim the fulfilment of your promise. Do you remember it, sweet one?"

"It is wrong, and very cruel of you, François, to remind me of it now. You do not, you cannot, know what I have suffered, or you would not be so cruel."

"Well, then, I will not, Rosalie; I will wait for better times. But come, dearest, let us sit down quietly. Dry those tears: do not grieve so much for what has passed, but let the future open to us, and tell me your sad tale. It will do you good, and it will enable me to act better in every way, as becomes the betrothed of one so precious."

"I cannot, François, I cannot tell you anything. There has been a cloud over my senses. Oh! what a coward I have been, how unlike my sweet sister Marguerite. She knows all, she can tell you."

"What!" said François, "is Marguerite here too—the pearl of pearls?"

"Have you not seen her?"

"How could I?"

"She was in the room when you came in."

"I saw but you, my beloved; I had no eyes for any one else."

"Hush! hush!"

"Love is blind," said François, gaily, "which means to every one but one, and that is why I could not see Marguerite."

"I know you will be glad to see her—she is my sister now, dear François. I will go and fetch her."

"Wait a moment, Rosalie: I am in a puzzle. Whose house am I in?"

"It belongs to Marguerite's uncle; but I fear, alas, that he too is dead."

"Were you frightened, Rosalie, when you heard that I was wounded?"

Rosalie raised her eyes, they met his, a look of intense love was beaming in both.

"I am satisfied," said François, clasping her to his heart, "and I will ask you no more foolish questions, dearest. When the cloud has passed away, we will talk of love. Much has to be done, and I should like to see dear Marguerite."

"Let me go then, and I will bring her here."

END OF VOL. II.



A R T H U R C O N W A Y;

OR,

SCENES IN THE TROPICS.

BY CAPTAIN MILMAN,

LATE H. M. 33RD REGIMENT.

AUTHOR OF "THE WAY-SIDE CROSS," &c.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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ARTHUR CONWAY.

CHAPTER I.

FRANÇOIS is seated on a sofa with Rosalie, his arm round her waist ; she is leaning on his shoulder, whilst the gentle Marguerite relates, as well as she can, all that the reader has been already made acquainted with, passing as lightly as she can over the coming of the negroes, and the fearful scene before the rude altar in the forest, until the appearance of the Carib Chief. And then she passed to other matters, which, although not very interesting in themselves, must be narrated for the development of this eventful history.

friend, and they were saved. Her
was naturally to thank God for
miraculous interposition of these
savages, when all seemed lost.
something absolutely awful in the
and silence of their attack, for
imparting an idea of supernatural a
in truth, it was but the method of
tised by the Caribs for a series o
Marguerite knew not this, and to
of God was visible, and to Him she
the rude altar.

Then she would have thanked
Chief, but when she held out her h
he turned away and veiled his e

that the Carib had acted precisely in the same manner at La Belle Etoile, when he had come to warn Arthur of the ambuscade set for him.

"It is their custom," said François, turning to Marguerite; "they are particularly jealous of their own women, and naturally suppose that we are the same. It was simply a delicate action; they are susceptible of the strongest feelings of revenge and friendship. Gratitude to Captain Conway for a kind act, has made this Carib his devoted friend."

Marguerite blushed deeply, and was silent.

François saw that he was treading on dangerous ground, so he continued gravely :

"There is something very remarkable in the demeanour of this man. He would not act in person for us, nor against us; yet, he has served us both well, and faithfully, still, I do not quite understand him; his motive is unknown to me, unless it is this. The Carib despises, and yet hates the negroes, and all

coloured men. He knew, by instinct or information, that they were going to rise, and commit atrocities against the whites, and he thought to find favour, both with French and English, by acting against them."

"What have we not, under God, to thank him for, dear François?" said Rosalie, timidly — She had scarcely dared to look up once during Marguerite's recital.

"Rosalie, dear Rosalie," whispered François tenderly in her ear. "Be merciful; can you think, that after this, it is possible for me to disbelieve in a divine Providence?"

"You make me happy, oh! so happy, dear François," she murmured, with a gentle pressure of the hand.

Marguerite was much pleased to see a soft, tranquil, happy look displace the mournful sadness of her sister's countenance. She had feared for her reason, for Rosalie had scarcely spoken, but in broken phrases, since the

startling appearance of the mulatto, Lemantin, at the door of the boudoir, and in her presence she had neither smiled nor wept.

“I shall leave you now, dearest,” said the fair creole, rising, and disengaging herself from her lover’s arms. Then stooping over Marguerite, she whispered: “Tell him all, dear sister, how we have suffered; it will soften his heart, it is already touched. I shall go weep and pray.”

François did not attempt to detain her; he saw that she could scarcely bear a repetition, even in words, of the terrible ordeal she had so lately passed through, and he was quite satisfied, that he had not only not lost ground, but gained it. She still loved him; there had been nothing to lessen her affection for him, but much to augment it.

And now he was absolutely impatient to hear further from Marguerite; to hear, and then to act: he felt instinctively that there was much for him to do.

"Our poor Rosalie has suffered greatly, ~~and~~
~~she~~. I fear much of it may be laid to me,"
 said, in a low tone. "Had I acted differently
 and I not been a fool, a madman, all this might
 have been spared to her, and to you; but
 will make amends (though I cannot recall what
 has happened), I will strive to make an atone-
 ment for my folly, if a life of devotion can
 be a recompense for a few days of such suffering."

"You must be gentle and tender with her, ~~and~~
 friend: she has, indeed, suffered much more
 than any woman but a martyr has undergone.
 You must show, by your life, that you are
 worthy of her."

"I will, I will," said Francois, solemnly; "but
 go on, dear Marguerite, with your sad history."

Marguerite continued:

"It was some time before our poor Rosalie
 recovered from her fainting fit, and when
 opened her eyes, she closed them again im-
 mediately, with an expression of horror, muttering
 'The white! the mulatto!'"

François ground his teeth together, and uttered between them something that sounded very like a curse.

"Hush!" said Marguerite, gently. "He is dead; he has gone before his Maker with his sins unrepented of. We should pray for his soul."

"You are so good, so gentle, and yet so courageous, Marguerite."

"Do not interrupt me, and do not praise me, or I fear I shall not be able to tell you what happened next. And pray do not look at me," she added, simply, "or I am quite sure I shall not."

Then she continued her history :

"When Rosalie recovered sufficiently to move, we retired a little distance from the fearful spot, to a rude couch of reeds and fern leaves, which the Caribs had constructed for us, under the shadow of a carob-tree, and presently, the white man in the priest's robe,

whom the mulatto had named Marinier, again approached us."

François would have spoken at the sound of that name, but Marguerite gave him an imploring look, and he forbore.

"I turned from him with disgust and loathing, a white man, a priest, leagued with such monsters, was a hideous reptile.

"He perceived it, and said, in a mournful tone: 'You will not hear me; but hearken, daughter, I have much to say.'

" 'How can I trust,' I replied, indignantly, 'to a secret malignant enemy; to one who has desecrated his holy office, to one who has joined with fiends in wicked deed, to injure those who have never injured him? Why do you persecute us, man? what harm have we ever done to you?' I could not help it, if it was spoken bitterly, for my feelings overcame me.

" 'I am no priest, maiden,' he replied; 'neither is it I who persecute you. It is one

far more powerful than I ; I am but his agent.'

" 'May God forgive you for your deceit and wickedness, cruel man ! See what you have done,' and I pointed to the pale and agitated Rosalie.

" 'Yes,' he continued, speaking quickly, as if afraid I should not have patience to hear him ; ' yes, it was I who seduced the soldiers ; it was I who endeavoured to set Le Blanc against him ; it was I who made a tool of the rough sailor. I watched you at the waterfall. It was I who wrote the false letter to you, to ruin him in your estimation. It was I who placed the ambuscade at the rocky pass, to catch him, dead or alive, on his return from La Belle Etoile. It was I, who, finding these things of no avail, fanned the fire in the heart of the mulatto, Lemantin, until it blazed out fiercely at La Belle Etoile. He was necessary to me, and I used him, regardless of all others. It was I who planned this marriage in the forest, that, seeing

you wedded, he might die slowly of a heart. It was you, maiden, and you I plotted against, for this. As for yon tr she might have been spared, but for the n Lemantin, who was bent on carrying h and I could not do without him.'

"I listened to this horrible confession and trembling.

"He fixed his keen, black eyes on n for a moment I shrank from them.

"Then he continued: 'Mark, Miss C all this I confess I have done, and more tell me, is it the instrument of torture t ferer curses, or him who orders it? I instrument, but he who has directed it away: I have worked for him until n has gone; I have failed, and he will c away.'

" 'To what does this tend?' I in wishing that this frightful conversation end.

" 'Do you not love this young man, .

Conway, with your whole heart?' he asked, abruptly; 'and does he not love you? I know it. Has no portion of his previous history been revealed to you in your loving intercourse? Has he never hinted at a fearful mystery that he would unravel?'

"I could not reply. He answered for himself: 'There has. Tell him, then, that he must seek me, if he would hear a secret. My life is in his hands; he must purchase it. It is little for him to give, but I ask no more. I will not tell it whilst I am a prisoner.'

" 'Are you not free, then, to come and go?' I asked, I hardly know why.

" 'No, maiden, I am in the power of the Caribs. Even now their keen eyes are watching me closely, although you see them not. Their bows are bent, and, were I to attempt flight, a dozen arrows would pierce me.'

" 'And yet you are unbound?'

" 'Still I am a prisoner; and I tell you more, it was the chief of these savages who desired me

to do what I wanted—to speak to you. content, or will not, address a white woman; they look upon her as a superior being,' was said with a bitter sneer, —' nor will I injure me, being a white man, and not injured them; but they will deliver me a conspirator. Let them do so, but it is to no other than Captain Conway. I have your power, maiden; and I tell you, I would give worlds to know what I know will tell him when I am a free agent.'

" 'And you would betray your ex-acting treachery to treachery?' I said, naively.

" 'Not so; my service is at an end but seek a new master.'

" 'How is it in my power?' I said; for that there was truth in part of what he said. I knew that Captain Conway had a mystery clear up, and I could not throw a chance for his sake.

" 'Captain Conway is by this time

roix, and the Carib wishes to know whither you would go?’

“ ‘Where are we now?’ I inquired; for I knew not.

“ ‘Nearly in the centre of the island.’

“ ‘We must go to Roseau.’

“ ‘Then I am lost, and my secret perishes with me,’ he said, bitterly. ‘And this is your fate! It is thus you show it!’

“ ‘He paused, and his words affected me keenly. When I reflected, and remembered that my kind uncle’s place was near Rocroix. I felt that we were quite safe, as long as we were in the hands of the friendly Carib Chief and his band.

“ ‘Be it so,’ I replied, briefly; ‘we will go to the plantation called the Carse of Gowrie. It is near Rocroix. Tell the Captain Baron so. Now leave me.’

“ ‘The man bowed low, and would have thanked me; but I waved him off, somewhat impatiently. He retired slowly out of sight, with his arms folded, and his eyes bent upon the

ground. When he was gone, I felt relieved, and yet I began to wish that I had questioned him further. I had the more time to reflect, for, on turning to Rosalie, I found she had fallen into a gentle sleep. I now began to find the heat oppressive, and it made me weary and feverish, and inclined to rest; but my thoughts would not let me. I became anxious and restlessly-curious to learn what the secret was.

“ Shortly after this, one of the Caribs, not the Chief, approached with averted face, and placed on the ground, near my feet, some sweet limes and other fruit, a baked cake of maize, and some heads of green Indian corn; and was about to retire, as he had approached, when I spoke. At the sound of my voice, he stopped, and raised his hand to his ear, and moved his head, to show that he was listening; but did not look.

“ I had often heard Arthur say that the best method of addressing the Caribs was in the third person, so I said: ‘ One maiden, see,

is sleeping—the other speaks for both. The white maidens thank the Caribs: they are very good; they have saved them from the cruel negroes. The maidens are grateful—can they do anything for the Carib, when they get to Rocroix?’

“The man evidently did not understand much of what I said, for he murmured, in a low voice: ‘Si si Rocroix.’

“‘The white maiden wishes to speak to the Chief: will he not come?’

“‘No Chief: les Caribes all same.’

“‘Le Baron, I mean.’

“‘He dere. Les Caraibes no talkee con muges.’

“‘And Marinier?’

“‘Him gone.’

“‘Good God! you do not mean to say that he has escaped?’ I exclaimed. ‘Carib, he is our bitterest enemy.’

“‘Si si sabé dat. Plenty Carib go too, Inglees Captain.’

"I understood him, the Caribs had carried off Marinier, as a prisoner, for Arthur.

" 'It is far to Rocroix, and the maidens are weak : how are they to get there ?'

" 'See—Caraibes got mulos. No can hablar, mas ; too mosh talkee.'

"I saw that the savage was anxious to be gone, though he still stood there with averted face, so I said :

" 'The maiden thanks the Carib. Tell Le Baron, when the sun is low, the maidens will ride the mules to Rocroix.'

" 'Good !' replied the man, with a sort of acquiescing grunt, and he moved slowly, yet gracefully, away, without ever once having looked at me even stealthily.

"I will pass over our ride," continued Marguerite, "though, at any other time, it would have been highly interesting, and, perhaps, a little ludicrous. I had to assist poor Rosalie to mount the mule, and then to scramble up on my own as well as I could, for the Caribs would

not touch even the hem of our garments. At night they constructed huts for us of twigs and large leaves, and brought us more cakes and fruit, but I could not induce any of them to speak to me. They were, however, very kind and attentive to all our wants. The silence of the night in the deep forest was very startling, but I had a sense of security, for I was aware that the Caribs were lying in a circle round us, and there was not any probability of their keen senses being taken by surprise. At length, I fell into a deep and tranquil sleep.

* * * * *

“The route must have been extremely circuitous, for we did not arrive here till yesterday evening, when our good overseer informed me that a battle had taken place near Rocroix, that the English had been completely victorious, and that a wounded French officer was lying ill in this house. This he wisely concealed, until poor Rosalie, worn out with fatigue and suffering, had retired to rest.

"I was uneasy on many accounts, and could not follow her until I learnt more. So I had an interview with the Irish soldier. He recognised me in a moment, and actually blessed me from head to foot. He gave me an account of the fight, which I will not distress you with—how Arthur had set out to take care of us. Then he described you accurately, adding, 'that you were the Captain's friend, that you had lost a little blood, but were in no sort of danger,' so that I had no difficulty in recognising you. So this morning, when Rosalie awoke, I thought I might safely gladden her wounded spirit, by informing her of the joyful tidings.

"When she heard that you had been wounded, nothing could persuade her that you were not dying; so she dressed hastily and went to see you."

"It was no dream, then, and she was there," muttered François. "Confound that fellow, Tom Connolly, and his docther in petticoats!"

“And now that I have told you all,” said Marguerite, rising, “I must leave you and go to Rosalie.”

“And I must see the Captain Baron.”

* * * * *

François went out into the verandah and called Tom Connolly.

“Are any of the Caribs hereabouts?”

“What’s them, your honour?”

“Pshaw! Are any of the men here who brought the ladies about the house?”

“Only one, Sir; and he won’t darken the doors, though he’s dark enough.”

“Do you know where he is?”

“Yes, Sir; the dark chap is taking it easy, smoking his dudeen under them quare threes with the big leaves, on which the phaties grow. This way, your honour.” And Tom led the young Frenchman into the garden, and there, sure enough, was a man, stretched at full length, smoking a short pipe, under a large plantain-tree.

It was the Captain Baron.

When he saw François, he jumped at once on his feet, and, taking his hand, kissed it, but did not speak. He looked at Tom Connolly.

"Strange!" thought François, "how loath they are to speak before a third person. Had not Rosalie been asleep, Marguerite would not have extracted a single word from the Carib."

Connolly, however, soon took himself off.

"Now, Le Baron, how can his brother sufficiently thank him for what he has done?"

"Le Baron does not wish thanks. He has but kept his promise with both his brothers."

"Ah! he has, indeed, done well to save the maidens—his brother's love, from the cruel negroes."

The Carib spat upon the ground. "The negroes are hogs, and the filthy mulatto led herd. The Caribs shot them down with their arrows. They fell screaming, like the parrots from the trees. It is good."

“ But tell me ; how came Le Baron to know of Lemantin, and his cursed treachery ? ”

“ The Carib has long ears, he hears sounds in the air ; but this was told in his ear. His brother, the English Captain, whispered : ‘ Kill the negroes ! Kill Lemantin ! Save the sweet flowers from the filthy hogs.’ Le Baron say : ‘ Good—by-and-by.’ ”

“ His brother was heard. Le Baron was only just in time to save the maidens.”

“ That true,” replied the Carib, with great simplicity ; “ Le Baron could not go till his enemy die.”

“ Ha ! you mean the rough sailor, the Master of the transport. You have killed him, then ? Well, no matter ; he was a double-dyed traitor.”

“ See, Carib no kill him—he die,” said Le Baron in English, with the faintest attempt at a chuckle. “ Le Baron promised his English brother not to touch the sailor, but sailor die all the same. When he was dead, Le Baron

went to La Belle Etoile. When he got there—negroes all gone—the house all on fire—Caribs look all round. They have the eyes of hawks. The negroes left a broad trail, see!”

And he laid two arrows nearly at right angles on the grass, indicating the separate route taken by the two bodies of negroes.

“Many gone down towards La Maison Vide. Brother know that place?”

François nodded assent; he remembered it but too well.

The Carib continued: “Few gone towards the mountains, across little savannah. Le Baron look close; see, small feet under the mangrove-trees. Then he pick up knife, look. Mulatto dog, Lemantin. See mule feet, too. The maiden gone up the mountains. Le Baron tell El Duque stay behind. Watch other negroes. Rest of Caribs come with Le Baron—plenty.” Here he held up both his hands twice, with his fingers spread, to indicate twenty. “Negroes few, bout one hand. They go slow, and

leave a broad trail. Caribs go quick, find them by the gushing well, Carib know the place. Dirty hogs think themselves safe, no one look out. Caribs all drawn round make a little ring. No speak. By-and-by, mulatto turn to seize white maiden; she scream, and fall down. Beastly mulatto slave, touch white maiden. No! The arrow of Le Baron go straight—pierce his eye. Then all die but white man. Caribs no kill white man when do Caribs no harm."

"Does Le Baron know who this white man was?" asked Le Blanc, anxiously.

"Marinier," briefly responded the Chief.

"What was he doing there?"

"Carib cannot tell. He saw dirty negroes: kill them. Save brother's maiden; that all."

"Where is Marinier? Is he safe?" asked François, even more anxiously.

"Does his brother know the Carib's cliff? Marinier is there."

The young Frenchman looked at the Carib in horror and dismay.

Had he killed Marinier.

The Carib's cliff. He had not seen it ; but its terrible name was well known to him.

It was an awful, frowning, perpendicular rock, with the deep blue ocean rolling at its base, down which the Caribs were wont to precipitate their women, upon even the slightest suspicion of infidelity. There were even worse and more horrible rumours about it, for on it, it was said, the Caribs used, of old, if not in later times, to hold their devilish rites over human carcasses, nay, even over the quivering, and yet warm limbs of their enemies. Whether the reports were true or false, the Carib's cliff had a fearful reputation.

"O, Chief!" said François, gloomily; "if you have killed this man, I fear you have undone much of the good you have wrought for us."

Le Baron only understood the first part of this speech. The second person puzzled him, but he replied, gravely and slowly, as if he wished his words to make an impression on François: "Marinier is not dead. The Caribs

keep him for the English Captain. But if the English Captain dies, Marinier must die, too. The cliff is very high."

"But, Le Baron, Captain Conway is all right. He left Rocroix yesterday morning, to return to Roseau. Nothing is likely to happen to him ; his brother is not sick."

The Chief shook his head. "Le Baron does not know. The English Captain went to seek the slavish negroes ; they are many ; they have muskets ; his brother is very brave, he may meet a bullet ; then Marinier must die."

"That is just, Carib ; but till then, no harm will happen to Marinier."

"His brother speaks the truth."

"Hist ! Le Baron. Listen ! Marinier must not die, even if the English Captain should fall, until his brother, Le Blanc, has spoken to this Marinier. Does Le Baron understand ?"

"Marinier will not die until Le Baron says so," said the Carib, haughtily.

"I suppose I must rest satisfied with this

assurance," thought Le Blanc, pausing at this proud speech. "I must flatter this savage a little, I see. Le Baron is powerful—he knows much; he is brave; he kills the negroes as easy as the ground-doves, or the ramiers on the branches. What humming-bird has whispered in his ear that the English Captain has gone to slay the filthy hogs?"

The Carib's soft eye lighted up with a strange expression, and he said, in his sweet, musical voice:

"The Caribs are nimble of foot; they run unseen amidst the forests, like the agouties; they climb to the tops of the trees and the pointed rocks like monkeys; they have eyes like the far-sighted hawks; they smell the negroes afar, like the Johnny-crows; they creep everywhere, like the ants. The red soldiers have gone towards La Belle Etoile; they will find the Caribs' mark; they will follow the broad trail by the sea-shore. His brother, whom the Carib loves, will miss his dove; her nest is burnt; she

has flown ; or she is killed. He is brave. Will he rest till he has killed the negroes ?”

The Chief paused, quite out of breath.

“ I cannot disbelieve him,” thought the young Frenchman ; “ his information is, no doubt, correct ; his men are everywhere, and their motions so secret and rapid, that indeed no one knows whence and when they come, or whither they go.”

Le Baron was evidently tired with his unusually long conversation, for, perhaps, in the whole course of his life, he had never uttered so many consecutive words.

He relit his pipe, and again stretched himself at full length, under the plantain-tree.

“ Will Le Baron answer his brother one more question ?” said Le Blanc, gently.

The Chief uttered a kind of groan—it was a token of weary assent.

“ Will Le Baron know when the English Captain returns to Roseau ?”

Another groan from the Chief.

"Will the doctor tell his French brother?"

The doctor pointed to the sun, and then to the patient's nose: and, shutting his eyes, as he spoke, put his finger out of his mouth and moved it.

The patient was over, as François well knew, as he returned into the house.

CHAPTER II.

what joy on earth can equal that thrillment, when, after a separation, fraught with fearful dangers, the lover clasps his mistress to his heart! Sorrow is forgotten; the pang of parting is remembered but as nothing to their present bliss. The misery, which they have endured, is but as a light breeze, fleeting over the blue heaven: it has shed its tears, and passed away, and is seen no more.

Deep grief that had settled on Rosalie's mind could not be easily removed, though it had been

turned aside by her lover's presence, and *Edith* altered feelings—his conversion, as she called it. She had felt the shock more severely than *Marguerite*, simply because she had less faith and less moral courage to bear up against the pressure of misfortune; and now she was rather ashamed of her weakness, when she compared her conduct with her sister's, and wondered how one so gentle, one so soft and child-like, could have kept her self-possession in scenes and circumstances so awful.

Faith and innocence had sustained sweet *Marguerite*, like the fabled *Una*, amidst death and terror. And now, lest a reaction should take place, too grievous for her to bear, her mind was all-absorbed by *Marinier's* confession. *Arthur*, her devoted *Arthur*, was to bear a secret—a precious, precious secret—for which he would give worlds! What could it be? Was it about his mother—about *Edith*? No, no; she would not believe it had anything to do with *Edith*. It must be about the mother

so dearly loved, and so sadly lost. Happy it would make him—her own dear

three met again at dinner-time, when Leon joined them. Dallas had come to Croix to visit his patient, and declared him convalescent. François told him briefly the adventures of the two girls, and a messenger was sent off to Morne Bruce with a note, telling Arthur of their safety, and arrival at the house of Gowrie.

The kind-hearted surgeon was deeply interested in the whole party, particularly in the story of our hero, and the sonsy, little Scotchman as he called Marguerite. François repeated as well as he could, what Marguerite had said about Marinier, and what the Carib had hinted about the possibility of Arthur being shot by the negroes. In fact, he told him nothing; for he felt and knew that he was not to a friend.

The conversation was long, and we must now extract from it.

We must fancy the two lolling comfortably in easy chairs, in the cool verandah, enjoying the fresh trade-wind as it came wantoning over the white-capped waves, and gently sighing midst the waving tresses of the tapering palm-trees, and making the huge banana-leaves flap lazily. On a little table before the surgeon stood a huge glass goblet of some amber-coloured mixture, in which popped about a little green lime. He was puffing gently at a real genuine cigar from the Vuelta de Abajo, the fragrance of which is scarcely known in these degenerate days. François was leisurely sipping some delicious limade, stronger drink being for the time prohibited. They were very comfortable, if not luxurious, and we must really forgive them if they felt so. Still we don't envy them, although, to our sorrow, we confess we have passed many a pleasant hour in some such place and manner. And there is something enjoyable in it. There is a charm in the tropics, let the vomito break it never so rudely.

* * * * *

"I think, Mr. Dallas, you have often been at La Belle Etoile, have you not?" said François.

"Oh, yes; I attended Miss Gordon during a severe attack of fever."

"Pray, did you ever happen to hear what caused that sudden and seemingly unaccountable illness?"

"Yes; I found it out from Captain Conway. It was the effect of an anonymous letter."

"Written by a man called Marinier?"

"You know it, then?"

"Yes," said François, laughing; "I am in the secret. It was I who advised Rosalie Devrien to send for Captain Conway."

"And nearly killed him by it. I thought at one time he would have lost his life, or his wits."

"I also wrote him a note, warning him of the danger of leaving La Belle Etoile exposed to the negroes. Did he never get it?"

"Yes, he did get it, but only on the morning of the twenty-seventh, and even then it was found by chance on the body of a very old negro man."

"O, mon Dieu ! how could that have happened ? It is nearly three months since I gave it to old Pierrot."

"I am aware of that, for I read it to Captain Conway myself."

"Treachery—some cursed treachery, which I don't understand ! Can Marinier have been at the bottom of this too ?" muttered François.

"The men had marched, and our force was but small ; but eight men were despatched to act as a garrison to the plantation. The Carib Chief would not go."

"Ay ; he would not leave his intended victim till he had killed him. What became of Captain Diver ?"

"What ! you know him, too ?"

"Oh, yes ; I dined with him at La Belle Etoile, and we rode into Roseau together afterwards. He was to have joined the picnic, but he never came."

"And what were you doing here ?"

"Come, come, Mr. Dallas, do not cross-question me too deeply, or I shall not be able to speak in confidence to you ; but, after all, it is

not about myself, but about Captain Conway, that I want your advice. I am deeply indebted to him on many accounts, for it is to him that I owe the preservation of one dearer to me than life. The Carib Chief was grateful to him—I doubt if he would have done the same for me. But you have not told me what became of Captain Diver.”

Dallas now briefly related the scene in Arthur’s room on the morning of the march. How the sailor was frightened by the appearance of Le Baron, and how he subsequently suddenly disappeared on the march, but how he died, or what became of him, he did not know.

“ But how came he to be suspected ?”

“ Oh ! he was found in a room with two notorious conspirators, Le Bar and Petun. They were hanged, but, as it was only suspicion against him, he was detained as a sort of hospital prisoner.”

“ Well, there’s an end of them. And what became of the eight men ?”

Dallas looked gloomy.

“ By Jove ! it never struck me ! They

never could have got to La Belle Etoile. The cursed negroes must have murdered them. Poor Ellam!—it will be a great blow to Captain Conway, if he is killed.”

“It is very strange what a yearning I have in my heart towards this young Englishman. We have certainly been strangely brought together; but it is not that—it is a deeper, a stronger feeling, akin to love.”

“I should not wonder at all,” said Dallas, with a smile, “if it were so; for, I can assure you, the feeling is reciprocal.”

“Do not joke with me upon this subject, I pray you. Believe me, I am sincere in what I say.”

“Well, it’s not likely to be a joke with him. Why, when you were lying in the bed senseless, he kissed your forehead—very few Englishmen would do that without a good reason, or close relationship—and begged me, by all that was sacred, to take care of you, for you were his brother.”

“*Sacristie*! What! do you mean to say, that he actually called me his brother? How

can that be? It was a mere *façon de parler*."

"Not at all, if you will listen to me. My own conviction for the moment was, that he was a little bit cracked upon certain points; but, from what you have said about this Marinier having a terrible, or, at all events, a carefully-kept secret to tell him; and from his manner, after seeing something that was hanging round your neck, and comparing it with something of his own—"

"What!" interrupted François, eagerly, "did he see the locket with the miniature? Ah! I remember now: I am very like the man."

"And, by heavens! you are very like him, though you are dark, and he is fair. There is the same smile, the same cast of feature; nay, when you speak, I could almost fancy I heard him."

"Tom Connolly said you were a conjuror, Mr. Dallas."

"Don't call me 'Mr.' any more; call me 'Dallas.'"

"Well, Dallas, do you know, that I have

often thought, or dreamed, or fancied, or what you like, that Conway was in some way related to me by blood. I am an orphan, a foundling; nay, I do not even know my father's name—his surname, I mean—but I suppose it to be De la Motte, for that was the name on my clothes when I was found."

"No, that can scarcely be."

"What can scarcely be? Surely you do not doubt what I say?"

"No, no," said Dallas, laughing; "you catch one up so quickly. Will you let me look at the miniature that seemed to have such an effect upon Arthur?"

"Certainly."

"And I may examine it closely, and you won't be angry at any remarks I may make? You Frenchmen are so hot."

"And you English so cold," replied François, gaily.

"It is a good quality in this climate, and I mean to turn it to some account."

François took the miniature, set in the gold locket, from round his neck, saying: "I be-

lieve this is nearly the first time I have ever let it out of my hands since I was quite a child."

Dallas looked at it attentively for some minutes, and then he gazed, long and earnestly, at François. Presently his glances passed rapidly from face to face. He closed the locket, and said, slowly and deliberately :

"That is the portrait of your father ; of that there can be no doubt. I am no mean physiognomist, my young friend, and I pronounce it to be so with confidence. There is even more likeness than is generally found between father and son."

"This is not new to me," said François : "I always supposed this to be the portrait of my father."

"Ah, you think me no conjuror now ; but I can tell you that I have seen this face often."

"What ! have you seen my father ?" cried the young Frenchman, in astonishment. "Good God ! is he alive ? Shall I find him, after many years ?"

"Too hot—too hot. I did not say I had seen your father. Of that I give you no

hope at all; but I think I can find you a teacher."

"Still you say you have seen this face?"

"And I repeat that I have; and, what is more, you shall see it; but, I warn you, that the sight will not be a pleasing one, and indeed I fear it will awaken bad thoughts in such a temperament as yours. You must give me a promise that you will keep your feelings under control."

"Marinier has something to do with this?" said François, eagerly.

"I should think he had, though at present it can only be guess work; but he must be forthcoming when wanted. Do you know where he is?"

"Yes, Le Baron has him safe."

"Who did you say?"

"The Carib Chief, Captain Conway's friend."

"This fellow seems to be at the bottom of everything. I shouldn't wonder if he may be turned to good account again."

"No doubt he will, if Marinier has any hand in it."

'How so?'

'I think he knows where Marinier has been for this last three months : perhaps we may be able to get hold of some information if we search the house. I think Captain Conway would be justified in seizing and opening any boxes or letters belonging to this Marinier.'

Yes, but we must go cunningly to work about it."

And you think it can be done?'

Certainly ; but you must secure the cooperation of this ubiquitous savage."

Can you put the trade-wind in a box ? can you catch the sunbeams ? can you work an impenetrability ? if so, you may make sure of the result. If you want him to speak he won't : threats, coaxings, tortures would be all in vain. He does it at all, it will be of his own free-will."

Well, you can but try."

I am in a very awkward position, you must observe, my dear Dallas. Can I confide entirely in your friendship ?'

Bah ! I know, or can guess, everything you have got to say. You were here about

three months ago plotting, or making love secretly—it's all the same : then you came over to fight fair, and make love openly if you won. Well, you got off better than the other conspirators—they were hung and you escaped—now you got licked, and are a prisoner. Why, don't you see, nothing could have turned out better—*vogue la galère*."

François shifted about in his chair uneasily.

"Yes, that's all true enough ; but suppose I am recognised—won't they hang me, too, as a spy ?"

"Who's to know you ? Le Bar and Petun are hanged : old Pierrot, who, I presume, had something to do with it, is dead. The Carib has killed your worst enemy, Lemantin : his gang is broken up. The Chief will be silent, and your new brother, Captain Conway, is not, I think, likely to throw you over. So, you see, I am the only one who can betray you, and I give you my honour I won't."

"Ah ! you have forgotten the one enemy—Marinier."

"We will keep him in the background till

you are out of this, and have got your wings clipped. Depend upon it, Miss Rosalie will tame you a bit."

"*Diantre !*" said François, rather pleased than offended at this allusion, "I believe the Irishman is right, after all, when he called you a conjuror."

"Yes, we doctors know a thing or two, and sometimes we patch up wounded hearts as we do mutilated bodies, by uniting the parts whilst still warm; believe me, they come together readily enough with proper treatment. Come, my friend, think of it."

"What—what do you mean?"

"What do I mean!" said Dallas, lighting a fresh cigar. "Why, marry Rosalie—I mean Miss Devrien,—I have got so familiar with them, that I pray you excuse me—as soon as she will relent towards you. Don't you see you will then become a Legitimist, and you can act with greater freedom?"

"You forget, Dallas, that she has but just lost a father, whom she dearly loved."

"More reason," said the surgeon, finishing

his goblet of sangoree, "that she should have a husband to protect her. Besides, set the example, and Conway will follow it. Unfeeling as I am, I should rejoice to see him married to La Belle Ecossaise—it would be the saving of him. My beloved Shakespeare says : ' If it were done when 'tis done, then 'tis better if it were done quickly,'—rather mysterious, but to the purpose. Tom—Tom Connolly ! get me another goblet of this delicious nectar—I mean sangoree."

Tom obeyed, but the conversation nevertheless slackened. François began to think that the best thing he could do was to marry Rosalie, if she would consent off-hand. The reverie was a delicious one. He recalled to his imagination her innumerable charms, her confiding love, and he soon persuaded himself that he was not acting selfishly, but for her good, and for the benefit of all concerned.

Dallas perceived that his words had taken effect, and he wisely left the seeds he had sown to spring up and ripen. The soil he had planted them in he felt was tropical, and they would

have rapid growth and maturity. Nothing of moment could be done but this, before Conway was called on the stage to play his part. Then the drama would be highly interesting. Dallas felt it so, but he little imagined how remote was the dropping of the curtain.

* * * * *

They met at dinner. Reader, you must not judge of this party by a home standard. Events were too hurried, too terrible, too sad for us who sit quietly round our snug table, enjoying our Christmas fare and our happy little society, even to imagine the position of Marguerite and her guests. Alas! in those days, ay, even in later days, such trials as these glorious maidens had passed through were but every-day events, at certain times in the history of our West Indian possessions.

* * * * *

Pass we this evening spent in mingled joy and sorrow.

Dallas returned to Rocroix to look after his patients.

François retired to bed, to dream of Rosalie.

The two sisters to weep and pray together, in the hope of brighter days.

* * * * *

The sun had not yet dispersed the grey morning mists that hung in fantastic drapery over the gently heaving sea. The trade-wind, as if lulled to rest by the darkness sighed no longer through the plantain-trees. The heavy night-dew stood in pearl-like drops on the leaves, and bent down the slender grasses. A dark form is stretched under a wide-spreading cotton-tree, his head pillowed on his arm, a bow is lying by his side.

Another dusky figure comes gliding swiftly and noiselessly amidst the trees and shrubs. You cannot hear his tread as he moves along.

But the sleeper has heard it; his hand is gently stretched out, and the bow is in it in a moment. Still he does not rise.

The new comer stops, and looks anxiously around.

The still movement of the purple lizard, twice repeated is heard through the still air.

The upright figure listens intently, putting his hand behind his ear, then he moves on to-

wards the cotton-tree. When he gets there, the recumbent figure is on its feet.

A few hurried words are passed in a low, soft, musical language.

The sleeper sinks again upon the dewy grass.

The other retreats as he had come, swiftly and silently, and disappears amidst the grey of the early dawn.

Presently, over the sea, towards the east, there rises slowly, and almost imperceptibly, an arch of pale, amber-coloured light, gradually at first, but rapidly increasing in its span. The drapery of mist rises and rolls towards the land. In a few minutes, a long, pointed streak of golden light streams up from the eastern horizon, then one on each side of it darts to the north and south. The mist rolls further inland. A moment! then along the deep blue sea, even to the narrow stripe of snow-white sand, is poured a flood of golden rays. A mass of unparalleled brilliancy succeeds, too dazzling for the eye to look upon. The mists gather on the mountain sides, and fill the valleys. The sun has risen !

The sleep of the young Frenchman had been broken and restless. The past, the present, and the future whirled wildly round his couch; and now when he awoke, instead of the beautiful angel of the day before, he beheld a wild-looking, half-naked ~~form~~ ^{figure} standing by his bed.

"Is his brother awake? If so, let him listen," said the Captain Baron, in his melodious voice.

François rubbed his eyes, and looked anxiously at the Carib.

"Well, Chief, what news?"

"Bad?" briefly responded Le Baron.

"Good God!" cried the young Frenchman, starting up in his bed. "You do not mean to say that Captain Conway is killed? Poor—poor Marguerite, after what she has suffered!"

The Carib understood him.

"The hogs were driven into a corner; they must die; even the base negroes will fight then. A bullet struck the Carib's brother."

"You say that the negroes have killed him? O. mon Dieu—mon Dieu!—how terrible! I loved him, Carib—I loved him!"

"Yet," added the Chief, sententiously, "Le Blanc fought against his brother."

François became dreadfully agitated.

"Carib, you cannot understand what I feel. Fearfully hast thou revenged thyself on me, O, God! for my contempt of Thy power. Hadst Thou stricken me in my rebellious pride, Thou hadst not humbled me! But now—but now! O, Arthur! O, my brother!"

The Carib saw the workings of the spirit within him, though he could not comprehend its outpourings. He laid his hand gently on the young Frenchman's arm, and said, in a low voice:

"The Carib Chief loves both his brothers, so. Let his French brother not grieve. His English brother is not dead. If he dies, Marinier shall die!"

Small consolation that, thought François: his mind immediately relieved of a fearful load when he heard Arthur was not dead. He was full of hope, a very contrast to poor Arthur.

"Carib," he said, "look well to this Marinier."

He must not escape, even if his English brother lives."

"He has no wings—he cannot fly. His prison is a high rock."

"Keep him fast—keep him fast, if you would do us a real service, Le Baron. Spare his life, but watch him closely. He is our bitterest enemy, but he must not die." Then, as if an idea had suddenly struck him, he resumed the third person in addressing the Carib, and said: "Three moons have shone and waned since the canoe went over the northern waters. Does Le Baron know where this Marinier was hid?"

Le Baron gave a slight groan, and muttered some Spanish name.

"Will Le Baron guide his brother to the spot when the time comes?"

Another slight groan was the response.

It was a well-known signal to François that the conversation was at an end for the present, but he also knew that his object was attained. Le Baron took his hand, kissed it, and glided out of the room, and he was not seen for some time afterwards.

Early as it was, François arose, and this time dressed himself without any assistance.

Tom Connolly was despatched to Rocroix to request that Dallas would join them at the Carse of Gowrie to hear some news of importance.

The surgeon guessed that it related to our hero, and lost no time in presenting himself at the plantation.

The greeting between the two was most cordial, but the surgeon was dreadfully shocked when he heard that Arthur had been severely, if not dangerously, wounded by the negroes.

And now the question naturally arose whether Marguerite should be informed of this sad event. After a lengthened debate, it was agreed that it should be broken to her gently by Dallas. Poor little Marguerite! Her lot was to suffer!

It was done carefully and guardedly by the kind-hearted surgeon. He gave her hope. The wound might not be a dangerous one after all. He would go himself the next morning and attend on his friend, and send her tidings without delay.

Marguerite turned pale, and tears stood in her eyes when she heard the sad news, but she bowed her head, saying : " God's will be done !"

* * * * *

The next morning was dull and misty, and, even to windward, there was not a single break in the leaden-coloured sky. The sea appeared to heave laboriously, as if kept down by the sullen atmosphere. Not a sail, not even a sea-bird broke the monotony of its inky hue. A dark haze shut out the distant islands from the view, although the eye could still trace their position : yet inland the mountains appeared close at hand.

François and the surgeon were seated in the verandah, ready accoutred for the journey, each with a fragrant cup of chocolate before them. They were waiting for the horses.

" This is a terrible day for our poor friend !" said Dallas, " if the fever is on him. How oppressive and sultry it is, although the sun has not yet risen !"

François did not reply, but stepped out on to the lawn.

"Peste !" he muttered. "I wish we had the chief here. He foretold the earthquake when there were no signs visible to me—but, *sacristie* ! I don't like the looks of it. Here are signs and omens that he could read easily enough, if he chose. I wish there was a barometer here. I say, Dallas !" he said, aloud, "come out and look at the sea."

"Never mind the sea : finish your chocolate, there's a good fellow, and let us be off."

"I don't think I shall go to-day," replied François, gravely, from the outside.

"Why, what a changeable person you are. Last night you would go ; now you won't. You're a true Frenchman, after all."

"Look at the sky, Dallas ; look at the sea. No trade-wind. The air like the blast of a furnace ; there is something brewing, either a hurricane, or another earthquake. Can I, should I leave Rosalie and Marguerite ?"

"Blow high, blow low, earthquake or hurricane, start for Roseau. You can follow, if you like."

"Tis the very sultriness of the day that makes me the more anxious to be with poor Conway."

"But, if we are caught by a hurricane in the mountain passes?"

"Well; I suppose we must lie down, and let it blow over us."

"Or if another earthquake?"

"As well there as here, or anywhere else; did the last give any warning? or if it did, was the warning of any use? No; I tell you, it is the best way, to take these things as they come, and trust to Providence, they are none of our makings; but fever and wounds may be cured and healed by such as we. And here comes Connolly with the horses. Will you ride with me to find a brother, or stay here to console Miss Rosalie?"

An old negro led one of the horses, and to him François addressed himself.

"What do you think of the weather, Pompey?"

"Dat not my name, please Massa," replied the old negro, with a grin, "me Van Tromp."

François repeated his question impatiently.

"Me no tink bout de wedder, Massa."

"Peste! are we going to have a hurricane?"

"No, Massa, not dis day."

"How do you know that?"

The old negro scratched his woolly poll:
"Cause de cattle and de pigs tell 'um."

"Are you making fun of me, you old scoundrel?" cried François, half laughing, half angry.

"Ole nigger slave, nebber laugh at buckra gentlemen. Van Tromp tell de trut."

"It's a pig's whisper, shure enough," muttered Connolly, grinning.

"What do you mean, then?"

"I ole man, Massa, see more blow dan one, no tinkee one come to-day, 'cause cattle no look about—go to water—all same as ebber; pigs yam, too, dig snouts in de troughs, den lie down and grunt; dey know better as we Christians when hurricane come."

Dallas had mounted, and so had Connolly, who, like most Irishmen, had a good seat, and was delighted at being on horseback.

François stood for a moment irresolute; then, as if acted upon by a sudden impulse, he, too,

jumped into his saddle, to the great dismay of Van Tromp, and tossing the old negro a dollar, with a gay laugh, he quickly joined the surgeon.

Old Van Tromp, without knowing it, had done a vast deal of good. More than a dollar's worth.

We will pass over their ride, which was performed as rapidly as the oppressive heat, and the still weak state of the young Frenchman, permitted.

As they entered the town, Dallas said that he would call upon Dr. Gray, and inquire about his patient, before he went up to the Morne. To this François made no objection, as he had previously met the Doctor at La Belle Étoile, and had liked him very much.

On passing Fort Charlotte, they saw a beautiful, rakish-looking brigantine, lying at single anchor under the guns of the fort, with her topsail loose, and a blue Peter flying; she did not carry a pendant, but was heavily armed for a vessel of her apparent tonnage; but like all trim-built craft, she was much larger than she seemed, and although she had a blue

ensign hoisted, she was evidently not British built.

What she had originally been is not known, but she had been captured after a long chase off the Havannahs, by one of our cruisers, and taken into Port Royal, where she had been condemned as a prize, and sold to some enterprising merchants, who had fitted her out as a privateer, and unlike the Government dock-yard people, they had remasted and fresh rigged her, exactly as she had been before, leaving her as rakish as of yore, only the 'Esmeralda' was changed into the 'Emerald.' As the riders passed the gate of the Fort, the sergeant of the guard was standing outside. It was our old friend Sergeant Owens. He saluted Dallas respectfully, and gave Tom a nod and a wink, as much as to say, "How came you on horseback, Master Tom?"

"How is Captain Conway, to-day?" inquired Dallas, anxiously, though he strove to hide it.

"Very bad, Sir, I'm told; he is rambling a good deal in his talk. Dr. Gray passed just now and spoke to me about it, for he knows,

God bless him ! that we are all very anxious about the Captain."

" I shall find Dr. Gray at home, then ?"

" Yes, Sir, he is just gone there from seeing the Captain."

" What vessel's that, sergeant ? where does she come from, do you know ?"

" She has brought letters and despatches from Barbadoes, and, I think, from England, too, Sir. I heard a rumour that more troops, under a field-officer, were coming here directly. They are wanted much, Sir, our men are sadly overworked."

" Many in hospital, Owens ?"

" Too many Sir. Yellow Jack has showed himself at last, and they are dying fast. There's Collings and Monaghan, and Price and Reid dead, Sir, within three days. Beg pardon, Sir, how are the wounded ?"

" All convalescent, Owens. The climate is much better to windward."

" We haven't had a breath of air here these three days—never since we came back from killing the negroes."

" Did you kill many of them, Owens ?"

" Nigh hand upon fifty, Sir ; but not before

they had shot the two Raftarys and young Austen, who was lifting the Captain up, a fine young fellow he was—we did not spare many of them, Sir: our blood was up.”

“ So I should think—but what became of Ellam ?”

“ Oh, he is doing very well, Sir, only I fear he is too weak to wait so much on the Captain as he does; he won’t let others act as orderlies.”

“ Thank you, Sergeant Owens: that will do.”

“ Now, Devrien, are you inclined to face Dr. Gray ?”

“ Certainly, *mon cher*, he knows me only as Mademoiselle Rosalie’s cousin and devoted admirer.”

We need not introduce Doctor and Mrs. Gray to our readers as our characters are already over numerous, and they have no further part in this drama than that of becoming the hosts of François Devrien.

We will merely state that Dr. Gray had been an army-surgeon; but finding a pretty creole with some money, willing to marry him, he had left the service and settled at Roseau as a physician; and as such he had pretty good practice.

They were kind people, and when Dallas explained the position in which François Devrien stood, they offered him the use of their house which he cordially and gratefully accepted. Here they heard the news relating to the 'Emerald' confirmed. She had brought intelligence of reinforcements having arrived at Barbadoes from England, and that a regiment, or at all events a strong detachment, under a field-officer, might be daily expected ; but whether to strengthen or to relieve the detachment already at Morne Bruce was not known. As soon as she had gone the round of the British Islands and landed her despatches, she was to beat up to Jamaica. And on her return to Barbadoes she was to collect mails, and afterwards, it was understood, sail direct for England.

The 'Emerald' was destined to have great influence on the future career of our hero ; but we must not anticipate.

François remained under the hospitable roof of Dr. Gray, and Dallas proceeded to Morne Bruce.

And now we will bid them good-night.

CHAPTER III.

DARK, lurid clouds, lit up, here and there, with a yellow, sickly ray, rolled in vast masses along the horizon; a dull, leaden, hazy sky hung gloomily overhead; the atmosphere was oppressive, and difficult to breathe. The lizards basked lazily on the walls; and alone, by an occasional movement of their large, bright, round, prominent eyes, showed that they were alive. The huge plantain leaves hung motionless; the light, feathery bamboos did not so much as stir a single leaf. Not a bird was in the air; even the bright-plumaged, busy little humming-birds had retired to the shelter of the forests. The demon of pestilence was abroad.

Such was the morning, when François found himself, for the first time, on the Morne.

Dallas was waiting for him in the creeper-covered porch. "Hush!" said he; "speak low: he catches every sound."

"How is he to-day?"

"I think the fever seems abating, though he is talking loosely and incoherently. Come in as noiselessly as you can."

Arthur Conway was lying on his bed, covered with a single sheet.

He had been brought out into the sitting-room, and placed in the centre, so as to have as free a circulation of air as possible. His face was flushed, and although he lay perfectly still, his eyes, shining with feverish brilliancy, kept wandering restlessly in every direction, never resting for a single moment on one object.

By his side sat the faithful Tom Ellam, fanning him gently, and keeping off the musquitos with a bunch of lime-twigs.

Gently as the two men had entered the room, the patient heard them.

"Who is that?" he said, in a husky voice, though his eyes still wandered about.

"It is I—Dallas, my dear Conway. I have brought a kind friend to see you."

"A friend! I have no friends; they are all dead—dead—dead; gone to their death-bed, all under the willow-tree. Ah, me!—one—two—three—they drop off like the leaves, when the hurricane strips the trees;" and a deep sigh seemed to burst forth from the depths of his heart.

"Come here," said the surgeon, in a low voice, to François: "place yourself where he can see your face distinctly."

The young Frenchman did as he was desired; and, kneeling down by the bed, he took one of the pale, thin hands, that were lying listlessly on the coverlet, in his own: it was fearfully emaciated, and yet burning hot.

"Dear Conway," said Dallas, stooping over him, "this is your brother François: do you know him?"

The fevered eye of the patient rested for a single moment on the Frenchman's face; and a faint, a very faint smile, illumined his flushed face; yet in that smile, faint as it was, there was hope.

But suddenly he murmured, in a low, moaning voice: "Can the dead come to life again? Ha! ha!" and then a wild laugh rang through the room. "I have it—I have it; that's the man in the picture, but he is dead—and his hand grasps mine—it's icy cold—corpses have cold hands—is he come to take me to my mother?"

François was deeply affected, and tears rolled down his cheeks upon the hand of the patient.

"What's that?" almost screamed Conway. "Blood! blood! more blood! Why do they all die? He's all bloody, see. The man with the glittering eyes did it. There's a flash. The tree is on fire. How many corpses? all dead—all! Edith! and Marguerite! and Rosalie! and my mother! O, mother! mother! why did you die? No, no; she is on my breast. She is not dead. Look! look! it's not there. I can't see it, there's blood in my eyes, blood—ever blood!"

At that moment, the report of a cannon, not very far distant, shook the wooden building, making the jalousies rattle again.

"See what that is, Ellam," said Dallas, in a low voice.

"Ha! there's the French come back again. Now then, we have cut them off. Steady boys! Gently! Don't throw a shot away. Down with the bloody gang. Don't spare a man of them. They burnt her. Revenge! That negro is aiming at me—shoot him, Owens—ha, ha! Yet there's one I love, spare him—don't hurt a hair of his head. That's him standing there—all blood—he's my brother, I tell you. Where's the Carib Chief? Too late—too late—too late! the rocks are falling down. Keep closer, Marguerite; don't tremble so, you frighten me. Well leapt—down, a thousand feet down: I can't see him, but the Carib can. They are all dead—dead—dead." And his head, which had been partially raised, fell back on his pillow, and his voice sunk into a low moaning whisper.

Ellam came back. "It's the 'Emerald,' Sir, fired the gun—the vessel that brought the despatches from Barbadoes. There's a letter for my young master from Plymouth, came by

her. A little breeze has sprung up suddenly, and she's getting under weigh."

"Do you think, Ellam, that the Captain is ever enough himself to be conscious of what you say to him?"

"I think he does understand me at times, Sir."

"Well then; try and impress on his senses, that the young ladies, Miss Margaret and Miss Rosalie I mean, are quite safe and well; do you understand me?"

"Yes, I do," replied Ellam, joyfully. "If he could but be made to understand that, I think my young master would come round at once."

"I am going to bleed him; this fever must be abated, and should he recover his senses even for a moment, Ellam, watch him closely, and do as I have told you: it is quite true. I must go into the next room, by-and-by, for a short time, so I shall leave you to watch then, though I shall stay and see the effects of the bleeding. Then he turned to François, and said in a whisper: "Now, Devrien, your interview has

lasted long enough. You have given me more hope of him than I had. Go and sit in there till I come;" and he pointed to the door of the bed-room.

François did as the surgeon requested, and without hesitation went into what had been formerly Arthur Conway's bed-room, and shut the door.

In one corner, on a small rosewood stand, there stood something covered with a green silk curtain.

He always affirmed that something beyond mere curiosity, impelled him to draw the curtain on one side.

What he saw astonished and confounded him. Such an article of furniture as this in an English officer's bed-room—and he a Protestant, to boot! He admired the exquisite chasing of the figure on the cross, and he soon perceived that the picture told some strange history.

But the left hand pannel, which, it may be remembered, had called up a demoniacal smile on the countenance of the priest, attracted him most. His gaze became rivetted. He took a

chair and placed it upright. He opened the shutters to admit more light. Then he sat down before it. Minute after minute, hour after hour passed, and there he sat looking at the picture.

No one interrupted him.

He had beheld that scene before—but when? but how?

Dallas at length came in, and for a moment broke the spell.

“Well, *mon cher*,” said he, “have you made it out?”

“No,” said François, sadly pressing his forehead with his hand. “There is a cloud still here. Bright rays are striving to disperse the mist, but it will not roll off. There it rests, and, I fear, will rest for ever.”

“Look!” said Dallas, pointing to the bleeding figure. “That is your father. Compare it with the miniature round your neck, and you will see it in a moment.”

“I do, I do! and the weeping woman! She, too, who is supplicating the cardinal.”

“That is Arthur Conway’s mother—and yours, too. See, I have removed the locket

from his neck—he has fallen asleep: that is what I waited for. Look at it. The features, the hair are the same—and her name was Eugenie de la Motte.”

“ And the man carrying off the child.”

“ You must ask Marinier who the man is; but the child is yourself.”

“ Eureka! eureka!” cried the young French man, in ecstasy, “ I have it now all clear as the broad daylight before me. I see it in my mind’s vision visibly, distinctly. Oh, what a flash of memory darts through my brain and dances before my eyes. Oh, Dallas! how shall I thank you? Raymond to Eugenie! Eugenie de la Motte! and the wood, and the grey horse, and the man with the glittering eyes—the bleeding corpse and the shrieking woman. Ha! her cry rings in my ears: My boy, my boy! How the horse galloped—how tightly the man held me—how I screamed. Then there was a horrid crash—my head was struck and my eyes flashed fire. By heavens! here is the scar on my forehead still; and I could remember nothing of all this for twenty years and more—twenty years!”

Then his voice changed to a fierce revengeful tone, and his eyes flashed fire.

"Who is the assassin? who killed my father? See you, Dallas, this can have been no fair fight. It must have been murder—cruel, cowardly murder."

"Calm yourself, and listen to me," said the surgeon, gravely. "What has made you forget all this for so long a time, has simply been the effect of the blow on your head, and this still incapacitates you in a certain degree—forgive me if I speak freely—from reasoning clearly and dispassionately, or I think it is probable you would never have become a bitter Republican."

"Don't preach me a sermon, there's a good fellow—I have seen my folly and do not mean to repeat it."

"You have had a bitter lesson—I trust you will improve by it, and now I think I can put you on the right track. It is evident to me, from certain signs and circumstances, that the man who killed your father—"

"Say rather who murdered him."

"Well, murdered him if you please—is identical with him who is at the bottom of this foul

conspiracy against the life and happiness of your half-brother, Arthur Conway. Is it not just possible that your mother may have slighted or rejected this man—this wily, treacherous, and dangerous villain? That he has power and means at his command is evident, for he has been already enabled to work much mischief through his agent Marinier, though thwarted by the mysterious hand of Providence, particularly by calling up this Carib as a protector and preserver, when all seemed hopelessly lost. Depend upon it, Marinier can throw a light upon the whole subject if he chooses; yet I would be wary with him, for I do not think he is to be trusted. You must see him, and alone. It is the same hand that slew your father that has used him as a tool to destroy Arthur. See to it, my friend: I will do all I can for you. Guard your temper, and marry Rosalie—make certain of her before you take any further steps. You will then be a free agent, and, if you like it, you may become a British subject.”

“I never heard of a married man being called a free agent before,” said François, laugh-

ing, "and as to becoming a British subject, that would be an act of treachery—but I will have nothing more to do with France whilst she is stained with her own blood. In the meantime, how am I to act?"

"No doubt the Carib will be here soon," replied Dallas, "to see how his friend, the English Captain, is getting on, and I will send him down to you with a small party of soldiers under a man I can trust, that serjeant we saw yesterday. And now I shall dismiss you for the present, for I have much to attend to. Reflect on what I have said, and be cautious."

"I would rather stay here," replied François, "and attend on poor Arthur."

"No, that must not be—you are too weak yourself; and, moreover, I fear a sudden shock for him. Go, and as soon as you have searched Marinier's dwelling, comfort Miss Rosalie; I will take care of Arthur—go, there's a good fellow."

François could not refuse, particularly as Dallas rose and gently opened the door into Conway's room. The young Frenchman cast

the lingering look on the ornamented crucifix, and followed the surgeon on tip-toe. Arthur was fast asleep. His eyelids had at length closed, and there was good hope now for him, should he awake without delirium.

Dallas squeezed the hand of the young Frenchman without speaking, and François felt was a signal for him to depart; so, returning the pressure of the kind surgeon's hand, he went out into the porch; and what was his surprise to see a half-naked, dusky figure, crouched under the shade of the matted creepers, smoking, quietly, with his eyes half-closed; but the moment François appeared, he rang, at once, on his feet. It was Le Baron.

"Brother in there no dead—eh?" said the Carib, in a low voice, pointing to Arthur's quarters.

"No, thank God," replied François. "Let the Chief's heart be glad; his English brother asleep, and there is hope."

"Good!" articulated the Carib, slowly. "Then Le Baron not die."

"What of him, Le Baron? Is the enemy safe?"

Le Baron groaned assent.

"Does Le Baron remember his promise, to show his French brother Marinier's house?"

The Chief groaned again.

"Is Le Baron ready to go now?"

Another groan.

"Wait, then, Le Baron, till I get a party of soldiers to go with us," and he was turning back to see Dallas.

"No want red soldiers: one plenty. Beasts ~~begins~~ begins run away when Le Baron come. Plenty ~~Catch~~ Catch when he cry like a hawk: no cry, ~~does~~ does not see. French brother come—eh?"

"Is it this, Le Baron?"

"Soon, one hour," replied the Chief.

Then Conway was leading François' horse up and down in the same hill under the mangroves in front of Arthur's quarters: and the young Frenchman went over to him, beckoning the Chief to follow. Tom said that he had orders to act as orderly to his lieutenant, as long as he remained on that side of the island: "and

that, in coorse, he was ready to go anywhere his honour pleased, without asking any one's leave, at all, at all; and he could get the Captain's other horse for himself."

François, glad to get hold of the Captain Baron so easily, was anxious to be gone, so there was very little delay; and the strangely-assorted trio set out for the middle ground, the proper name for which was La Vuelta di Abajo. While Tom Connolly had gone for the horse, the Carib had suddenly disappeared; but in a few minutes he returned, and now he was in his full war-dress, with his shark-skin quiver of arrows at his back, and his hard-wood bow in his hand.

Little was said on the road, until they came to a spot where they had to turn off from what was dignified by the name of a road. Then the Carib notified to François that he must dismount, and give Connolly the horses to hold; then, with a flashing eye, he pointed to some rocks, that served as the opposite portal to the high cliff, and said: "See dere; beastly negroes kill two Caribs—shoot them from de

rocks. Caribs spit on de negroes ; kill twenty for two. Dat good—eh, brother ?”

François did as the Carib desired, and followed the Chief, as he led the way up the winding track, spoken of in a preceding chapter. But this time there were no guinea-fowls scampering through the grass ; not a living thing was to be seen. Weeds had already begun to spring up in every direction, defacing the once well-kept provision ground with their nauseous presence. In a few months it would be a wilderness, so rapid is the growth of plants in this warm and rainy island.

The Carib, with his usual precaution, whispered to François to remain concealed in the bush till he saw there was no danger to be apprehended. He crawled up to the house, twisting and twining like a snake amidst the grass and rank growth of weeds, and listened intently ; there was no sound but the chirping of a cricket, and the hum of mosquitos. He peered in at the door, which stood ajar ; there was not a soul inside.

What had become of its inmates we know

not ; probably after the death of the old man, and the defeat of the negroes, they had fled into the bush, fearing to be implicated in the rising against the white men : but of this we have no certain knowledge.

The house was carefully searched by the young Frenchman, who discovered nothing ; but the keen eyes of the savage detected, amidst a heap of withered leaves, blown in through the open door, a single small scrap of paper.

He handed it to François. It was evidently the corner of a letter, torn off accidentally.

François took it eagerly, and, to his great joy, found the writing was not washed out or obliterated. A curious expression lighted up his features, when he had deciphered the writing on this scrap of paper. Few as the words were, they gave him a clue to his own history.

“No longer the Abbé Latouche, but once more the gay Marquis de Charolles. On second thoughts, I shall drop the Marquis, and call myself plain Mister, as these islanders have it. How will it sound, Mr. and Mrs. Charolles ?”

“This must be Marinier’s correspondent,

Arthur's persecutor, his father's murderer ; and his name is the Marquis de Charolles, and he is alive and in England."

How he longed now for an interview with Marinier, to learn if his suspicions were correct. He folded up this scrap of paper as carefully as if it had been a note for thousands, and placed it near his heart : then his eye sought the Carib Chief, but to his surprise he had disappeared.

He was greatly annoyed at this, and ran down the steep descent to where he had left Connolly with the horses.

"Have you seen anything of the Carib, Tom?" said François, out of breath.

"No, your honour, the savage has not shown himself; but I heard that queer hawk scream just now."

"Oh, he has been called away by some of his own people: but no matter, my errand is accomplished."

* * * * *

François did not remain long at Roseau. Dallas declared that Arthur was not in imminent danger, and persuaded François to return

to the Carse of Gowrie, to cherish and protect those he had left there.

We need not relate what arguments he used to overcome Rosalie's maiden scruples, but he succeeded, and no wonder, for the helplessness of the position of both these fair young girls was truly singular. They had no relatives—scarcely any friends. The times were uncertain and threatening ; they had suffered already fearfully, and they wanted a protector. There was a chapel at Rocroix, and there these two became one, by the holy rite of marriage, performed by a French priest, who had taken refuge from the terrors of sans culotteism.

* * * * *

A few days after the wedding, François received a visit from the Carib Chief, who, without explaining why he had left him at the deserted hut, said that the surgeon had sent him to say that his English brother was well ; and, just before he took leave, he said :

“ If his French brother wishes now to see his brother, Le Baron will take him to the rock. The piragua will come to the orange-grove in

two days, two times," meaning two days running. "Brother, sabe where dat is?"

François replied in the affirmative, and said :

"In two days the Carib's brother will be there, when the sun passes towards the west."

CHAPTER IV.

LE BARON was true to his appointment, and when François arrived at the spot indicated, he found him seated on a rock, smoking his never-failing pipe, with the canoe lying at his feet. Without saying a word, he arose, and carried the piragua down to the sea, and, assisting the young Frenchman to creep in, he pushed it off, and stepped in himself, with so nice a balance, that it scarcely dipped on one side. Then he paddled away swiftly to the southward, keeping close to the shore, but skirting the bays and inlets. They passed the Souffrière, and rounded Scot's Head. François could not help admiring the beauty and sublimity of the scenery. Here

a mountain spur ended in a sheer and giddy precipice, with twenty fathoms of deep blue water at its base ; another, more rounded, sloped gradually away to a narrow fringe of sand or shingle, covered with fantastic shrubs and waving ferns. Again, another would pierce the ocean with a sharp point of irregular rocks, and behind this would tower a mountain clothed to the summit with brilliant and variegated foliage.

At length they came to a small but deep bay, with a narrow beach of snow-white sand, backed by a semicircle of frowning, inaccessible cliffs ; at the southern horn of the bay there rose a lofty and singular rock. At a little distance, it appeared an abrupt promontory, but, on nearing it, you found that it was perfectly isolated. Detached from the main island by one of those awful throes and heavings of the earth so frequent in the Antilles, it stood a sublime record of the Almighty's power.

Overhead a few creepers had thrown out feelers from the island, as if nature was endeavouring to re-unite it, even by a slender tie, to

its parent earth. But below a narrow channel of deep water divided it entirely from the main land.

"Plenty Carib up there," said Le Baron, speaking for the first time. "Brother want to see Carib town?" and he pointed to the top of an apparently inaccessible cliff.

"Not now, Le Baron—not now. His brother wishes to see Marinier.

"French brother plenty welcome. Caribs all good—negroes all bad," and he spat into the water. "Bad as shark fish—plenty down there. Brother, take care no slip into the sea—that bad; Le Baron tell Marinier so. Shark fish good as red soldiers to watch Carib's Cliff."

This, then, was the notorious Carib's Cliff. François felt a slight shudder pass over his frame. The Chief then ran the canoe up a little creek between two rocks at the foot of the inlet, and François stepped out carefully on the slippery surface.

The Carib pointed to a sort of zigzag path cut in the rock, and said:

"Marinier, up there."

"But, how is his brother to get away again?" asked François, eyeing the steep ascent.

"The Carib's brother knows the hawk's cry, when it is heard, the piragua will come for him," and he paddled away; and running his canoe high on the sandy beach was lost to sight in a moment.

Left alone on this singular islet, rent as it were from the neighbouring cliff, the young Frenchman mechanically felt that his pistols were safe, and then with a beating heart he began to climb the steep and slippery winding stair. Once or twice he had to grasp the rocks on either side to save himself from falling, and as he stopped to rest against an overhanging ledge, he looked down into the clear blue water and turned away shuddering, for there in the crystalline depths he could discern the dim grey outlines of several huge tigers of the deep, cruising slowly about, or hovering in mid water like birds of prey in the air.

About half-way up the rock, the stair seemed to end in a small platform of dazzling snow-white sand, on which were the prints of footsteps.

The mouth of a low browed cave stood yawning opposite to him.

"Who is there?" said a voice that sounded harsh and loud, as it reverberated against the sides of the winding cavern.

"It is I, Le Blanc, don't you know my voice, *mon cher*?"

"Yes, I know it; what do you want here?" rumbled from the depths of the cave.

Not a hearty welcome this, thought François; but never mind, *le pauvre diable* is a prisoner. "I have come to pay you a visit, Marinier, and I want to have a chat with you—where are you?"

"Here;" but the echoes puzzled him.

François, unused to this semi-darkness, went stumbling forwards over the points of the stalactites that rose from the bed, occasionally knocking his head against the roof, but taking it all in the most perfect good-humour until he found himself suddenly treading on soft sand, and a gleam of light penetrating the roof showed him a figure lying at full length on a sheep-skin, spread on the ground.

“ Ah, I’ve found you at last ; what a devil of a place !”

Yet was the cave, when lighted up, a fairy palace of dazzling colours.

Marinier turned his face towards him—it was fearfully haggard ; his eyes were bloodshot, and his beard unshorn, for nearly a fortnight, gave to his pale face a fierce and unearthly expression.

He addressed the young Frenchman abruptly:

“ Do you come as an envoy from Captain Conway ?”

“ No, *mon cher*, I have come on my own account.”

“ On your own account—how so ? Is it to revenge yourself on me ? You see I am unarmed—my life is in your hands—take it. I wish for nothing better. I cannot take it myself, I am too great a coward. Bah, one plunge into the deep sea and all were over ; but those cursed grinning sharks—I cannot do it.”

“ Don’t fret yourself, *mon cher*, I do not want revenge. I have merely come to ask you some questions, and much I may say

depends upon your answering them freely and truly."

"And what harm will befall me if I should refuse to do so, or what good shall I get by answering them?"

"I can procure not only your release from this prison, but safety for your person, if you will comply with my demands, and your answers satisfy me."

"The temptation is a great one certainly; but I doubt your power."

"I will prove it to you by-and-by, and to show you that I already know something, I will cap you with a name. Tell me, are you acquainted with an individual who calls himself the Marquis de Charolles?"

Marinier replied bitterly, but without the least hesitation:

"Do I know him? of course I do, or I should not be rotting here miserably like a worn-out wild beast, in a cave."

"Do you no longer care for him, then?"

"I care more for life and liberty; but you must prove to me that you have the will and

the power to rescue me from this degrading captivity, Monsieur le Blanc, or whatever your name is."

"That's exactly what I want to know."

"You must remember, that we rowed in the same boat. I have learnt to be suspicious, and—, but no matter.

"I know what you would say, Marinier; but that is all past and gone. I am a prisoner on parole, and have married Mademoiselle Rosalie Devrien. So you see; I am in the road to become a Legitimist altogether, seeing that my best half is so already. Bah! that old conspiracy stinks in my nostrils. How could a man of your education and talent, herd with such beasts as Lemantin and his filthy gang?"

"I played my game, and lost it. It is all over now, and I only wish to be free."

"No more plotting, then, eh? no more schemes against the young Englishman?"

"No; on my honour. I only wish for an interview with him, to tell him a secret."

"Can't you confide it to me; I'm safe?"

"No; it would lose its effect."

"And if I help you to an interview with him, which I will do; will you answer me what I want to know?"

"Ask your questions."

"Let me light a cigar first. Do you smoke? Well! take one, then, it will comfort you," and François coolly proceeded to strike a light. This done, he lay down on the soft sand, and while Marinier was kindling his, he thought, now for it; let us see what we can draw out of him—*diantre*! he seems ready enough.

"All right, Marinier."

The *soi-disant* Jesuit nodded assent.

"Was the Marquis de Charolles ever at Marseilles, in Provence?"

A shade of suspicion passed across Marinier's features, as he said:

"Do these questions relate to Captain Conway?"

"*Parole d'honneur*, no; they are for my own use and benefit."

"Say on, then," replied Marinier, apparently satisfied.

"You have not yet answered my first interrogatory."

"Let me think. Yes: I have heard the Marquis say that he had been there once."

"And what was he doing in such an out-of-the-way place?"

"I think he went to fight a duel."

"And killed his adversary?"

"I believe so."

"Thank you, Marinier: you have relieved my mind from a great burden."

"How can that possibly be?"

"I thought," said the young Frenchman in a drawing tone, letting the smoke curl gently out of his mouth, "that this man, this Marquis de Charolles, had murdered my father—that's all."

Marinier saw that he had been entrapped; yet, what mattered it to him now? freedom was his all in all—that must be gained at any price, or his new game could not be played out. No evidence at this distance of time could possibly be found to prove the Marquis a murderer, though, that he was one to the full extent of the word, he well knew, as the reader has already heard.

"Murdered your father! What do you mean, young man? I do not understand you!"

"Or killed him in a duel. Well, it does not much matter which. I don't remember my father; what was he like? who was he? was he noble? Ha, ha! Now I have married a legitimist, I should like to find myself one of the *ancienne noblesse*. Come, tell me, *mon cher*."

"How can I tell you, if I do not know?" replied Marinier, with an impatient shrug.

"But you do, and must, know, Marinier, for you are well acquainted with this *soi-disant* Marquis de Charolles, and he killed him. What the devil did he carry me off from my mother for? can you tell me that? Was it to adopt me?"

"You are speaking in riddles. I know nothing of you or your mother. I only know that the Marquis went into Provence to seek out one who had deeply injured him."

"But I do," replied François, almost in a whisper. "Her name was Eugenie de la Motte."

"What?" almost screamed Marinier, "what did you say?"

"Eugenie de la Motte," repeated François, calmly.

"Who, in the devil's name, has told you all this? Was it Captain Conway?"

"No, no; he can scarcely even speak, as yet. I learned it all by a singular accident. I wish you would be more open with me, *mon cher*."

But Marinier was silent. This had struck him like a thunderbolt—suddenly and unexpectedly. He paused to reflect. This, then, was the other son of her whom his employer hated with such a rancorous hate, that, not content with her death and dishonoured memory, he had used every means in his power to destroy body and soul, to blast the happiness and injure the fame of her child. Oh, how he cursed the Carib in the depths of his heart; but for him, and him only, not only the one son, but both, would have suffered the deepest injury that man can suffer—a wound that would have rankled, festered, for years and years; per-

haps never to heal again. And here was one of them, free and happy, and married to the maiden of his choice ; who, but for the Carib, would long ere this have been the leman of a savage mulatto. And this man, ardent, frank, active, and intelligent, was in possession of part of his secret. How could he have obtained the knowledge ? Who could have betrayed him ? Little did Marinier think that it was only conjecture on the part of the young Frenchman that the Marquis de Charolles was the man who stabbed his father. Dallas and François had settled it between them, as we have seen, that Marinier's employer was the man in the picture, and the scrap of paper found at the Middle Ground had betrayed his name, or rather names.

“ ‘No longer the Abbé Latouche, but once more the gay Marquis de Charolles. On second thought, I shall drop the Marquis, and call myself plain Mister, as these islanders have it. How will it sound—Mr. and Mrs. Charolles?’ ”

Marinier was the first to break the silence. Until this moment, he had not the slightest

inkling of this young Frenchman being the son of De Charolles' victim; he had made up his mind to tell François what he knew about this transaction, of course, with certain reservations, but he did not do so at once, for he said :

" Did I hear you aright? Captain Conway cannot even speak? What has happened to him? I am afraid you are deceiving me, Monsieur Le Blanc."

" I have told you the simple truth, Marinier. He has been badly wounded, poor fellow! fever supervened; but he is getting better fast, although still so weak that he is not allowed to speak to any one."

" How, then, am I to have an interview with him?"

" You must wait a few days, Marinier—here, if you like it, in this quiet, retired spot—or you may come and take up your quarters in the gaol at Roseau."

" By all the powers of hell! it would drive me mad to live in this wretched dungeon much longer, watched by a set of cursed savages!" said Marinier, fiercely.

“ Courage, mon ami ; c'est la fortune de la guerre.”

“ Ah !” replied the prisoner, passionately, “ you know not what hinges on this. He will be too late. Much good time has been already lost by this fatal imprisonment.”

“ If you mean Captain Conway, I tell you he cannot leave his bed for three or four days to come, if it were to save his soul from perdition.” Then he added, with a laugh, that grated harshly on Marinier's ears : “ When he is well and strong enough, he will no doubt follow my example, and marry Miss Gordon. She is in want of a protector. Do you not think so, *mon cher* ?”

“ Malediction !” muttered Marinier, “ if I can't get free, I shall be utterly powerless, I see,” and he pressed his hand to his burning eyes.

“ What's the matter with you, Marinier ?”

“ You said, Monsieur, that you had the power to release me from this atrocious captivity. I put myself in your hands afterwards ; only let me out of this. It is too degrading ; a prisoner to such beastly savages.”

— Tush ! tush ! There are few of the old noblesse to be compared to this Captain Baron.”

“ Pshaw ! you are mocking me. Come, say that I may be free, and I will tell you all.”

“ One thing is certain,” replied François, quietly, “ that unless you do, there is very little chance of your ever leaving this pretty cave. Should Captain Conway die—and you know that this climate is somewhat deadly—I don’t think anybody will seek you here, but your humble servant.”

— Peste ! you have me in your hands,” said Marinier, sarcastically, whilst at the same time a slight mocking smile played round his thin lips, unseen by François. “ I might as well tell you all I know.”

— Say on, I am all attention.”

— When the Marquis de Charolles was a gay young man about Court, he fell desperately in love with a Mademoiselle de la Motte. Her father was a great friend of the Marquis, and agreed to a contract of marriage between them ; whether the contract was ever signed, I do not know ; but about the time that the marriage

was generally supposed to have been fixed, for the young lady suddenly and mysteriously disappeared. The Marquis was furious, and had a stormy interview with her father, who, by way of pacifying, showed him a letter which his daughter had left. This only increased his fury, for it vilified and traduced him. He sought her everywhere, in England, in Germany, in Switzerland, in Italy, but for nearly four years he could hear no tidings of her, so well had her flight been concealed. I know now how that was managed. But one day, he happened to be at Marseilles, and there he heard, I know not how, that a lady, with bright golden hair, was living with her husband, in a small château, near Frejus. He rode out, unaccompanied, on a powerful grey horse, and in a glade of a forest, he saw her he loved, walking with a man, whose arm was twined round her waist, whilst a boy, about four years old, was running and playing about them. The Marquis told me that his brain reeled at the sight, and that he nearly fell from his horse. When he recovered, he rode up to the party

and threw himself off his horse, which had been trained to stand perfectly still. The cavalier heard him, and removing his arm from the lady's waist, confronted him. The Marquis drew his sword; he said that he could not speak, but he struck the cavalier across the face with it. In a few moments, he was lying on the turf pierced through the heart. Suddenly, he heard the sound of horses galloping towards the spot, and had scarcely time to sheath his bloody sword, before he saw a distant figure on horseback, coming rapidly down a long vista.

Prompted by revenge, he snatched the boy up, and throwing himself into his saddle, rode off *ventre à terre*. He heard the sound of horsemen in pursuit, but soon outstripped them, yet he galloped madly on. His noble grey, spurred to its utmost, tripped in a deep rut, as they passed near the orchard of a large farm-house on the outskirts of the forest: as they fell, something struck the boy a sharp blow upon the forehead, and on lifting him up, the Marquis thought he was dead. He was pursued, he had no time to reflect, so he remounted, and rode on.

"And left the poor boy to perish ; that was nobly done," said François, bitterly. "But the slaughtered man's name? you have not told me that."

"Alas! I cannot; the Marquis never mentioned it."

"Ha, is it so!" exclaimed François, passionately.

"On my honour he never told me the name of his rival."

"And what became of the boy?"

"I know not, neither does he."

"He lost all trace of him, then?"

"Yes, I believe he thought the boy was killed, and inquiries might have been dangerous."

"Can the dead rise again, Marinier?"

"*Diantre!* why do you ask me?"

"For vengeance," replied the young Frenchman, with a flashing eye.

"I do not understand you," said Marinier, meekly.

"Never mind, go on; tell me what became of the lady."

"The Marquis tracked her into Italy, to Rome, and then to Naples—nay, even as far as Hamburgh—there she was lost."

"For what did he follow her?" asked François, with an air of surprise.

"How can you ask me!—did she not spurn his love?"

"How did she escape him, then?"

"I know not, but I can guess; she did not fly alone. In all countries there is a secret society that thwarts many a well-laid scheme. A hidden arm turned away the blow."

"This is a singular story," said the young Frenchman, musingly. "Can it be true? it was not what I expected to hear."

"I have nothing more to tell you, Monsieur, and I must leave it to you whether it is worth a recompense."

"You have told me nothing, Marinier," replied François, with fearful *sang froid*, "that I did not already know. But this Marquis de Charolles, this Abbé Latouche, this Mister de Charolles, where is he now? Is he alive? What is he doing?"

"Pardon me, Monsieur," replied Marinier, without manifesting, outwardly, the least surprise at this knowledge of the *aliases*, "this is my secret."

"But I must learn my father's name from him, if you cannot inform me."

"That cannot be!"

"It must be!" replied François, fiercely.

"Do not use threats—they are in vain," said Marinier, in a gentle voice. "When I have disclosed to Captain Conway what I have to reveal, *he* may, if he thinks fit, tell you more of the Marquis. Yet, even that I doubt—yet, why should I? Help me to an interview with Captain Conway, as soon as he is strong enough to hear a strange tale, and then, possibly, you may learn your father's name."

"And you have nothing more to tell me?"

"Absolutely nothing."

"Then I might have saved myself the trouble of coming here?"

"You don't mean to leave me in this cursed den, at the mercy of these savages?"

"But I do, at least for the present: besides, I have no means of removing you."

"How did you come, then?"

"The Carib Chief brought me in his canoe."

At the sound of that name, Marinier was silent.

"Time for me to be off," said François, suddenly jumping up, "*au revoir*, Marinier: come, shake hands; don't think I bear you any malice for what is past and gone; you couldn't have done me a better turn. So shake hands, and I'll get you out of this as soon as I can."

Marinier glared at him like a wild beast covertly: at that moment a devilish thought crossed his mind. One push from behind as he descended the stairs. The deep water and the blue sharks—his foot slipped it well might be so—but the consequence to himself. No, it would not do; so he held out his hand, which François shook with real good-will, for he pitied the poor devil.

"Take care," said Marinier, his thoughts dwelling on the idea, "how you go down; the steps are steep and slippery. There is a rope somewhere, I can fasten it round a rock, and it is long enough to help you down the steepest part."

"Thanks, thanks," said François, waving his hand as he turned away, "I do not think I am born either to be hanged or drowned: which will be your fate, I wonder?" and he began to hum a song whilst Marinier, with a curse, brewed himself on the sheep-skin.

The descent was difficult and dangerous enough, but the young Frenchman was young and active, and reached the rocks, at the foot of the cliff, in safety. Then he gave the Carib's yell, as well as he could imitate it. He was not kept long waiting, for a canoe was launched from the beach, but François saw, at a glance, that it was not Le Baron who paddled it; not that the piragua was unskilfully managed, for it was shot in a moment into the creek, but the man, though dressed the same, was of lower stature and less strongly made. It was one of the Caribs who had paddled him over the northern waters, the guide of Arthur to the grove, El Duque. "Where is Le Baron?" said François, as he got into the canoe which was immediately in rapid motion.

"He up dere," said the Carib, pointing with his paddle to the southernmost cliff.

"Le Baron said he would go back with his brother: why does he not come?"

"He make talk to Caribs."

"Ha! El Duque—Caribs have tasted blood, they want to kill more negroes—is that so?"

"Brother wrong," replied the Carib, shaking his head sententiously, again applying himself to his paddle.

"Does the Carib wish to keep it hid from his brother? If so, his ears are shut."

"His brother can see well, but the Caribs have the eyes of the hawk; see from the mountain big ships come, what English call men-of-war; very big ships: see one, two, out there;" and he pointed in a south-westerly direction.

François strained his eyes, but in vain; he could see nothing but the waving ocean.

"Pose dem French," continued the savage, more eagerly than was usual to them. "Carib what do? Caribs of Saint Vincent still fight against King George; here fight for him. Dat not good; plenty Carib tink so. Le Baron make talk; him say no fight at all. Dat not good; Carib love fight. Le Baron great man;

now every tink ; talk like humming-bird ; but
we English too much : plenty Carib say so."

"And what does El Duque say?"

"He say, kill negroes ; dat very good : kill
mulattos ; dat good too : but no kill white men ;
they too many strong."

"But suppose these ships are English?"

"Den no more fight, no more talk ; all same
as before."

"*Plait à Dieu !* they be British ships,"
murmured François, "for poor Arthur's sake.
Heaven knows, I want no more fighting now.
Rosalie is quite enough for me;" and, for
the first time in his life, he did look forward. "Should
these be the promised reinforcements, Arthur
would be superseded in his command. Mari-
nier's person was known to more than one of the
soldiers, and to many of the people in the town ;
how could it be managed that he should have
an interview with Arthur, in personal safety,
and without compromising the young officer?
The Baron might take it into his head, at any
moment, to bring Marinier into Roseau ; and
François was fully aware, that, since his con-

finement on the rock, Marinier had become dogged and sullen, and would answer no questions, if Arthur could not preserve his life, and give him freedom ; in fact, he had a secret to sell. Some communication must be kept up with him, through the medium of Le Baron François, never slow in making up his mind how to act, again addressed the Carib.

“ Will El Duque whisper a word in the ear of the Captain Baron ? ”

The Carib groaned assent.

“ Tell him that his brother, the English Captain, whom he loves, wants to see him, when the moon changes.”

This was in about a week.

“ Si. si. El Duque know English Captain too. He brave man—kill negroes—dat good ! He no dead—eh ? ”

“ No. He will get well soon ; but he cannot go to the Carib’s country—Le Baron must come to him—does El Duque understand ? ”

The Carib again groaned assent.

François found Connolly waiting for him with the horses at the end of the orange grove. He

mounted, and rode rapidly off without a word : nor did he speak until he arrived at Dr. Gray's ; but, just as Connolly was leading his horse away, a sudden thought seemed to strike him, and he said to the soldier :

" Can you carry a message, Connolly ?"

" Iss, Sir ; as many as your honour likes."

" Tell Mr. Dallas that I have learned nothing ; that the man was sulky, and would not speak freely ; but that we were right as far as we have gone. That the man insists on seeing Captain Conway, and I think he should. Can you remember this ?"

" Faix, Sir, my mimory is as deep as a well ; there's no bottom to it."

" Stay. I had nearly forgotten something : the Caribs say that they can see two men-of-war far out to sea, but standing in for Dominica. But it is a dead calm now. However, I shall get out of the way. Tell Mr. Dallas that I start very early to-morrow for the back of the island. Here's something for you to drink my health, Tom," and François slipped a joe into the soldier's hand, and hurried into the house.

“Och ! thin, yer honour is the real gentleman, I’m thinking ; and Ellam says he is the Captain’s brother. Sure he’s going to the Carse of Gowrie. Hurry, you beauties, or I’ll forgit what he tould me.”

* * * * *

The calm lasted all that night, and the whole of the following day. Heavy thunder-clouds rested on the mountains, and every now and then a perfect deluge of rain came pouring down, seething and foaming against the earth ; but about midnight a light breeze sprang up, and rolled the clouds far out to sea.

* * * * *

Next morning, two frigates hove in sight to leeward, and, to the great joy of the town’s people, they soon discovered, with their glasses, the Union-Jack flying at their peaks.

One of them tacked, and stood in for the island, and, in due course of time, let go her anchor in the roadstead off Roseau. The other bore away, and ran down to the westward, as if in chase of some vessel in the offing. The distant booming of great guns was heard at

intervals for some time, and, just before the sun set, the royals of a two-masted vessel might have been seen against the dark horizon.

Presently, troops began to land, and Dallas hastened down to see the commanding-officer, a stiff old Scotch Major, who took much snuff, from an old battered mull, and was a notable martinet. He heard the surgeon's report of the wounded, of the terrible vomito, and of Arthur Conway's delicate state, without moving a muscle or making any remark; but said, sharply:

“ And weel, mon, whare's my hoose ? ”

Dallas explained that Arthur still occupied it. The Major took a pinch of snuff, and declared that he must turn out, well or ill, for was he not the commanding-officer ? Dallas remonstrated, but nearly got into a scrape. This was accordingly done, and poor Arthur was compelled, that very afternoon, to move into another quarter. But instead of doing him any harm, the change was rather favourable to him.

The two-masted vessel proved to be a merchant brig, bound for Dominica. She had been

chased for a long time by two vessels, one apparently a frigate, the other a privateer. She was in great danger of being captured, for the French had sent their boats away, when they were suddenly recalled at the appearance of the British frigate, and at the same time a rakish looking brigantine was rapidly coming up, before a light draught of wind, from the north-west, whilst they were utterly becalmed. The brigantine hoisted British colours, and she and the frigate were left in chase of the two French vessels: the merchant brig taking advantage of the light breeze, soon lost sight of them, and anchored off Roseau.

The other frigate, as soon as the troops had all disembarked, slipped her cable, and stood out to sea in chase. No sooner was she out of the lee of the land than it again fell dead calm. Again the thunder roared hoarsely, and the rain fell in torrents.

Next morning the frigate had disappeared, and not a glimpse of a sail could be seen far or near to leeward.

For five more dull, heavy, tedious days, the

calmness of the atmosphere was perfectly awful. Every one thought that some terrible storm was brewing: the barometer went down, and expectation was at its highest.

But during that time a great alteration took place.

The Major had heard rumours and hints of dire plots and conspiracies; the island was ripe for rebellion, Republican agents were everywhere, a fresh expedition was preparing at Guadeloupe; in fact, Dominica was said to be in imminent danger, double sentries, with loaded firelocks, were posted everywhere about the Morne, the garrison of Fort Charlotte was increased, the militia were called out. Spies innumerable were sent into the town and country; all people who could not give a satisfactory account of themselves, and many could not, for the English language was utterly unknown to them, were arrested. Some were detained for trial. If the elements were calm, not so was the breast of the old Scotch Major.

* * * *

On the afternoon of the fifth day from the

known in the neighbourhood. The door-keepers of a house were sent by the land-lord down to arrest him.

There was in Arthur's mind when these thoughts came upon him.

"The loss of the 'Emerald'! very well, so the Major! I have something to say to the Major himself."

* * * *

"I tell you what, Arthur, you must do it; every movement is closely watched; every word is carefully guarded, and it is impossible to bring Major Conroy in without a great risk of his falling into the Major's clutches, and he goes mad."

"I am ready to do anything," replied Conway, somewhat hesitatingly; "but see this man, I must and will."

"He must come to you, that's certain, for you cannot go to him; and he must be at liberty, or he will tell nothing. Now listen! I have no doubt but that the 'Emerald' will be in a hurry, if not to-night, and this very night the main quarters."

“Do you think my brain so touched, Dallas,” said Arthur, with a faint smile, “that the moon quartering should affect me?”

“But it does, and will influence your fate, if you are not too impatient to listen to me.”

“I have parted with that failing, I hope; it has done me mischief enough, already.”

“Not so much as it will do you yet, if you don’t take care,” replied the surgeon, almost in the spirit of prophecy; “even now it is tormenting you unconsciously.”

“Well, tell me what I am to do. I am so weak that I cannot think for myself, much less act.”

“The Captain Baron comes here to-night—your brother François told him to wait till the moon changed—he is wiser than I imagined.”

“How will the Carib escape the sentries? Should anything happen to him it would make me utterly miserable—my protector, my preserver.”

“He has got a coat that renders him invisible when he does not want to be discovered;

12

ARTHUR CHESTNUT.

"We should wish to see you in this way
soon after sunset."

"What then?"

"You must write a note to Mariner to meet
us—~~perhaps~~ just what you like."

"But where am I to meet him, in God's
name?"

"In the dock of the 'Emerald.'"

"I am to understand your meaning?"

"Then I will make it as clear as daylight.
Your wound is still very painful—you do not
regain your strength as you ought; in fact, this
sickness will very likely kill you. Change of air
is absolutely necessary. There is a capital op-
portunity—you are run down to Barbadoes in
the 'Emerald.' I will settle all that with this old
Sergeant Major. For dare not refuse you leave."

"What can I do and leave my sweet
Marguerite?"

"You would not marry her in your present
state. No, I forbid the banns; but perhaps
after all you don't care much about seeing this
Mariner. If so let him rot where he is—he
does not deserve to live."

"No, Dallas, I must and will see him—who knows but that I may, through his means, be able to offer poor Marguerite an untarnished name?"

"And a noble estate forebye: well, it's worth a trial. Shall I go on?"

"Pray do."

"The Captain of the 'Emerald' owes me his life. I saved him once when all had given him over to death—he can now repay me. I will go on board and see him. All he will have to do is to lay his vessel to off the Souffrière, and fire a gun, and take a man on board—that is not much. He will be glad enough of you, for you will have to pay passage-money. You must write a note to Marinier to tell him of this, and the Carib Chief must be the messenger. I don't think Le Baron will make any difficulty about releasing him if you insist upon it, and we must take him off in a canoe to the vessel. Do you think the plan feasible?"

"Yes, if the Carib comes; but that I doubt, my luck is so bad."

"He has never failed you yet, though you mistrusted him, as you do now."

"True, too true; still I cannot get over that dreadful feeling, that I am doomed to be unfortunate in everything."

"You will be so, till you get one thing," said the surgeon, laughing.

"And what may that be?"

"A sweet wife, to soothe your troubled spirit."

"Ah, my poor Marguerite, something whispers to my heart an ominous foreboding: shall we ever meet again?"

"Nonsense, Conway; you are getting happily over this troublesome wound. She is safe and well. When you come back, marry her, and I will give her away."

"Yes, when I come back," murmured Arthur, in a low, sad voice. "Dallas, I must see dear Marguerite once more, before I leave, to bid her farewell."

"Impossible! I will not allow it, even had you time. You might have a relapse. Even now you have agitated yourself too much. I

wish you would learn to view things more cheerfully. Now lie down, and rest till evening. I will go and settle everything with the crabbed old Major. Ellam."

The gamekeeper answered the summons.

"Your master is not to leave the sofa until my return—say about eight o'clock. Do not be surprised if an unexpected visitor enters unannounced. Pack up, in a bundle, a razor, some dressing things, and a suit of decent clothes. They will fit well enough. You need not trouble the Captain about it, but give them to the Carib when he quits, and say they are for his prisoner."

"Which of them dark chaps is it, Mr. Dallas?"

"It is the one they call Le Baron."

"Ah, if it's him, we're all right as a trivet; and he shall drink my health in the best glass of liquor I can give him."

"Mind, you keep him till I come."

"Very good, Sir."

"But you are not to make him drunk, Ellam."

"Never fear, Sir."

"Find out who will be on sentry at the stables : he may overhear things we don't want."

"It's our men to-night, Sir. If so be it's anything to do with the Captain, they are all right. Sergeant Owens commands the guard."

"The orders are very strict to arrest every one found on the Morne. Just go and whisper to him that the Carib Chief will pay Captain Conway a visit this evening. He must not be molested."

"Very good, Sir."

"You will have to go with the Captain to Barbadoes, in a day or two, Ellam ; perhaps to-morrow ; so be ready to start at a few hours' notice."

"Very well, Sir. I'll see to it directly."

"And mind, Ellam, a dangerous customer will come on board, off the Souffrière. Watch him closely, particularly when he is near the Captain. Pump him too, if you can."

"Yes, Sir : anything more ?"

"Be in the way to-night : that's all."

"Now, I'll bet a guinea," said Ellam to him

self, after the surgeon had gone, "that this is that sneaking, poaching, underhand scoundrel, Marinier. If he it be, let him look out for squalls, as Gentleman John used to say. Now I must go and look after the Captain."

Ellam found him writing a letter, instead of lying down on the sofa, as the surgeon had ordered.

CHAPTER V.

MORE than a week had elapsed since the young Frenchman's visit, and Marinier was still imprisoned on the rock. He began to despair of ever escaping from this horrible captivity, and leaning over a parapet of rock, he looked into the deep, blue water, half meditating a plunge into its depths, when he felt a light touch on his shoulder. He started, and turned round. The Carib Chief was standing there with a bundle in one hand, whilst, with the other, he held out a paper to him.

Marinier grasped it eagerly, it was a sealed letter. The Carib deposited the bundle, and abruptly retired without saying a word.

Marinier tore the note open impatiently, and, with a wavering countenance, read its contents rapidly. When he had finished it, he read it over again, more slowly, with a bright light in his dark expressive eyes, whilst his haggard countenance underwent a remarkable change. The note was as follows :

“Circumstances have occurred which prevent Captain Conway from being able to extend his protection to Monsieur Marinier. He is no longer in command of the troops on the Morne. The present commanding-officer is very strict, and fresh information having been given of supposed attempts of subornation and plots, it would be very dangerous for Monsieur Marinier to show himself in or near Roseau even in disguise, as he might be recognised as a conspirator, spies being out in every direction.

“Captain Conway is about to proceed to Barbadoes for the benefit of his health.

“A vessel called the ‘Emerald’ is hourly expected, and will sail again a few hours after her arrival. She is an armed brigantine, with very

raking masts, but does not carry a pendant. She is painted black, with a narrow gold streak above and below her ports, of which she has six of a side. She is flush-decked, and painted inside of a pale pink colour. Her figure-head is a woman, holding a comb, and it is highly gilded.

“ If Monsieur Marinier thinks he can recognise the vessel by this description, and considers what he has to communicate is of sufficient importance to venture on board, he may do so in safety, that being already provided for ; but, if not, he will be conveyed to either of the French islands.

“ The Carib Chief will paddle him off in his canoe to the brigantine, which will lay-to off the Souffrière, and fire a gun. Captain Conway has sent a suit of clothes, and such articles of dress as will enable Monsieur Marinier to appear respectably.”

“ *Par Dieu !*” said Marinier, aloud. “ How the young fool plays into my hands. To have him all to myself—to be rid of that cursed

young Frenchman, with his mocking smile, his monkey tricks, and biting tongue. Well, it's worth all I have suffered in this den! If I can but get him to throw up his commission, to desert his mistress, to run away to England—Will he take me with him?

“He will be too late—he will find Edith married to De Charolles, the priest-marquis. What a villain that is! but *n'importe*, he pays like a prince when he has it.

“What will this youngster do? Hang himself?—not unlikely. Or will he prosecute his claim to Morley? Not he. Edith will twine herself round him. He loves her still, I am sure, for all this Scotch girl—curses on her!

“She will beg him, for her sake, to spare her father, and the weak fool will do it—anything for her sake. But the paper! That precious bit must be carefully kept back as a last chance. A slight hint as to its existence may be thrown out as a lure, but its price must be—what? A life and a death!

“Let me see, can I hint about its contents safely? Why, yes. All the ports on the con-

inent are shut against the English. Hamburg—ay, Hamburg—is bitten by these Republican mad dogs, and has become as rabid as they. I should not wonder if their churches were stables already for *sans culotte* cavalry.

“Well, well, if I cannot destroy this young man, whom, indeed, Heaven seems to watch over, I must contrive things so as to be able to make a bargain with him. If it comes to a fight between him and the Marquis, and the boy wins (improbable as the contingency is, still there is a contingency), the Marquis will be a bankrupt, and I have not fifty pounds left. I have slaved for him, and am tired of it. I don’t like always playing a losing game.”

All that evening Marinier kept revolving in his mind different schemes for his future conduct. He viewed, and reviewed, every possible feature of the case, as a skilful lawyer does: and before sleep fell upon his bloodshot eyes, he had firmly persuaded himself that no contingency could possibly occur—no point arise for which he had not already fully prepared.

His previous defeats, so simply and artlessly

affected, did not serve as warnings, but rather acted as stimulants to fresh endeavours. He regarded them entirely as accidental circumstances, over which he had no control. But now, everything was in his own hands: if he failed, it would be his own fault; and fail he hardly could, for he was resolved to profit by the winning party, whichever that might be. Should he ruin Conway, the Marquis would reward him liberally; of that he had no doubt; for he had him in his power: and to the other, he could sell a secret.

He slept long and soundly; and when he awoke, the daylight was streaming through the chink in the roof of the cave. He shook himself, and took out a crumpled letter, and began to read it; but suddenly he replaced it, for he became aware that the Carib Chief was standing by his side. He had brought him food, and waited until he broke his fast before he spoke.

“Dress quick,” said Le Baron, “bad wedder coming, ships no wait—sea very angry soon—wind come wrong way.”

Marinier opened the bundle, and, taking out

a small pocket looking-glass, viewed his grim and haggard features with a mixture of pain and merriment.

There was plenty of fresh water in little pools all about the bed of the cave, and having shaved himself and performed his ablutions, he dressed himself as rapidly as he could, casting away his rags with contempt, and surveying his altered appearance and decent clothes with a degree of complacency. Such is fate; had he not stopped to dress himself, the end might have been—what?

“Haste, haste,” said the Carib, eagerly, “dere a flash—no tink hurricane come, but small blow come for certain.”

Another flash succeeded, lighting the cave as they left it.

Marinier followed the Carib as fast as he could down the winding stair, though he felt dizzy and bewildered, and scrambled into the canoe which, impelled by the Carib's paddle, shot like magic out of the creek.

“Look, no shark now—all gone, dey know there nobody on the cliff now,” said Le Baro

with a slight chuckle, for, be it observed, he never laughed.

The sea was growing troubled and angry, though as yet there was little wind, and the light canoe bobbed about alarmingly in Marinier's opinion ; but there was no danger.

The brigantine had rounded Scott's Head. What wind there was came in slight, uncertain puffs from the north-west, and all along the horizon rolled huge masses of blue-black clouds, here and there capped with a fringe of snowy whiteness. Sheet lightning, of pale and ghastly blue, was streaming incessantly along the horizon, and every now and then a zigzag flash of rosy flame seemed to dart downwards, and strike into the turbid sea.

A moment of perfect calm ensued as the canoe reached the 'Emerald,' and ran alongside ; but still the brigantine was rolling slowly and heavily, with her white sails flapping lazily against the masts.

A sailor caught the bow of the canoe with a boat hook, and it swung lightly round : at the same moment another lowered down a rope-ladder.

"Be quick, Sir, up with you, or the canoe will be staved to atoms," cried a voice from the ship, and Marinier starting up, seized the side ropes, and began to ascend slowly and laboriously.

The Carib gave one stroke of his paddle, and the canoe shot off a few yards. He appeared doubtful, whether Marinier would not fall back into the sea.

As Marinier was thus creeping up the ladder, the vessel gave a heavy lurch, and he nearly lost his hold altogether, but a brawny seaman leaned over the low bulwark, and catching him by the collar, helped him up, but in doing so, some part of Marinier's dress got entangled in the rigging, and he stooped down to disengage it, nearly drawing the sailor overboard.

Something dark fell. It floated for a moment close to the vessel's side.

At that moment, Marinier was hoisted bodily on board.

The Carib gave one stroke of his paddle, whirling the canoe round, and reached the black object ere it was drawn in by the suck of the ship—no one saw him.

Then darting away again to some little distance, he stopped for a moment, and waved his hand, kissing it repeatedly to Arthur, who was standing at the taffrail, close to the stern of the vessel. Then, applying himself vigorously to his paddle, his light canoe went dancing over the dark troubled waters, gracefully and rapidly, like a fairy boat, to the intense admiration of the rough, yet jolly tars, who made many a remark on the nigger in his walnut-hell, and was soon lost behind a projecting headland.

From that moment he was never seen again by any one connected with this tale. And here we bid the faithful Carib good-by, with a parting remark.

We have often, for convenience, and because it has been the custom, called him, in this narrative, the Chief; but he was not so in name (for they acknowledge no chiefs, and, from all accounts, never did), although in reality he held nearly a supreme authority over the Caribs; so much so indeed, that, through his influence and address, they never followed the example

of their brethren at St. Vincent, who, under a chief, called Chatoy, or Chatoye, fought so long and bravely against us; perpetrating, I am sorry to say, many horrible acts of cruelty and bloodshed. But at Dominica, the Caribs either kept entirely aloof, or, if they did fight at all, they fought on King George's side.

François afterwards often thought that he had given the Carib Chief cause of offence, by refusing his offer to show him the habitations of his people; and this is not improbable: yet this man's influence on the fate of our hero did not end here.

* * * *

The storm was short, sharp, and severe; but it never amounted to a hurricane—only what is commonly called, in the West Indies, a blow.

The 'Emerald' weathered it bravely; but the agitation of the little vessel was such, that no communication between landsmen could take place; in fact, Marinier lay deadly sick in the berth that had been allotted to him, in the forepart of the vessel; and it was not till the third

day, after quitting his prison, that he was summoned by Ellam into our hero's presence.

Let us at once proceed with

Marinier's Confession.

"Who and what my parents were, cannot interest you; but I was never taught any other maxim than that of providing for yourself: honestly, if you can; if you cannot, there is an alternative.

"I soon learnt, that whatever crimes you may commit, a cloak of hypocrisy is very useful to hide them. I was a dutiful son, a regular attendant at mass; in fact, to all outward appearance, a good, steady youth.

"Circumstances threw me in the way of the Marquis de Charolles, then a gay and dissipated young man: an accident placed me in his power. He did not take advantage of his discovery of my dishonesty, but attached me to his person as a useful agent in his intrigues, and as a spy upon his antagonists in play and love. I soon discovered that nothing stood in



1. The first part of the document is a header section containing the title "THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA" and the author "BY HENRY REEVE". Below this, there is a list of contents or a table of contents, which includes chapters such as "THE FIRST CHAPTER", "THE SECOND CHAPTER", and so on, up to "THE FIFTY-THIRD CHAPTER".

2. The second part of the document is the main body of text, which is a historical narrative. It begins with a chapter titled "THE FIRST CHAPTER" and continues through several other chapters, including "THE SECOND CHAPTER", "THE THIRD CHAPTER", and so on. The text is written in a formal, historical style, typical of 19th-century American literature.

3. The third part of the document is a concluding section, which includes a chapter titled "THE FIFTY-THIRD CHAPTER". This chapter likely summarizes the events of the previous chapters and provides a final perspective on the history of the United States.

whispered amongst them that she did not confess; that she read the Bible; in fact, that she was a heretic—a Huguenot.

“I had a difficult card to play amongst them. They were all so devoted to her, that it was dangerous to meddle with anything in which she was to play a part; but my cloak of hypocrisy stood me in good stead.

“I soon saw that my master was desperately in love. He abandoned, for a time, all his intrigues with lofty dames, and dismissed his mistresses. He was daily at the hotel of the old Count, and I attended him there whenever he went. I wormed my way into the confidence of the household.

“Servants have keen eyes and ready ears. I knew that the young lady did not return his love, and that there was a certain handsome cousin in the army who was not indifferent to her; but that her father had consented to a contract of marriage between his daughter and my master, though it was not till afterwards that I discovered what had influenced the old Count to agree to this alliance—it was this:

The Marquis had won an immense sum at play from him, which the Count could not possibly pay, and in endeavouring to retrieve his ill luck, my master had discovered that the dice were loaded.

“He changed them skilfully, and the Count’s ill luck pursued him, and he lost again.

“My master wanted money, and he loved. No wonder, then, that he urged a hasty fulfilment of the conditions he had imposed as the price of his secrecy. The day on which the formal contract of marriage was to be signed and witnessed was fixed. A violent scene had taken place between the father and daughter—this I learned from the servants—in which she positively refused to marry the Marquis. The father insisted: but to make the story short, I need but say that when the day came, the young lady had disappeared, and could not be found. A female body was discovered in the Seine and exposed at the Morgue, which was said by many to be hers—and, indeed, it was currently believed that she had drowned herself rather than marry the dissolute Marquis—and the rumour

was allowed to spread unheeded ; but we did not think so, for a letter to her father had been discovered in her apartment.

“ The Marquis was frantic—ruined beyond redemption. His love, for he did love fiercely and blindly, spurned contemptuously—death or flight preferred to him. It was maddening. He upbraided the old Count, he accused him of hiding her, of keeping her away from him, or allowing her to escape. He swore he would expose him to the world—I was present. The Count produced a letter. The Marquis snatched it from him rudely, and read it aloud. I remember its contents well.

“ Her father had threatened her with a convent if she persisted in refusing the Marquis—she said she would consent to neither. That the Marquis was hateful, loathsome to her, and she would not marry him. That she would not be shut up for life between the walls of a nunnery—neither would she fall by her own hand, for that was impious ; she would not appear a self-murderer in the presence of her Creator. It was a deadly sin to take false vows, to love and honour one she loathed. .



naries for the better understanding of what is to come," replied Marinier, with a smile; "are you tired, Sir?"

"No, no; go on. I am all impatience to hear more."

"A scene of mutual recrimination succeeded the reading of the letter. The Count accused the Marquis of robbing him of his daughter, and ruining him. The Marquis called the Count an old swindler, a cheat.

"Swords were drawn, but no blood was spilled, for the old man, overcome by rage, fell down in a fearful fit, foaming at the mouth; and though he lingered on for a few weeks, he never recovered his senses, but died, as it were, with a curse on his lips, and there was scarcely money left to bury him.

"My master swore a fearful oath, never to rest night or day, until he should have revenged himself to the utmost upon her who had scorned and rejected his love. He sold everything he was possessed of, even to his feudal estates, and I need not say that he came of a very ancient family. With me, as an attendant,

he hunted Paris a few days only after the Count's death in search of vengeance. I need not detail our wanderings: but for more than three years he continued them through every part of Europe. But our search was unsuccessful. So well had they concealed their flight (for she had gone off with her cousin) that no trace was left.

- We returned to Paris: but my master did not again mix in society; he frequented the gaming-tables, where, for a time, he had a wonderful run of luck. There we remained in obscurity for nearly two years, yet, you must not suppose that the search was discontinued. The Marquis had agents in a hundred places on the look out to give information.

- I began to think that she was really dead: but he did not. Hate kept hope alive.

* One morning, after being absent all night, the Marquis entered, flushed, and in great agitation, and drawing a heavy purse, or rather bag of gold from his pocket, he said: 'Hie out, Chaumelin, and purchase the best horse in

Paris for me, and a good one for yourself ; spare no price.'

"I did as I was directed, without asking any questions, and succeeded in buying a splendid grey horse, perfectly trained, for my master, and a good stout roadster for myself.

"The Marquis never spoke ; but I saw, by the sparkling of his eyes, that he was full of some desperate resolve. The next morning we left Paris. We rode through Sens, Auxerre, Lyons, and Avignon, until we arrived at Marseilles. There we put up at an obscure *auberge*.

"When the horses had well rested from their long journey, the Marquis said to me :

" 'Wait here, Chaumelin, until I return ; but be ready to start suddenly when called upon. I go alone.'

"He started at night, and did not return till the following evening, his horse all covered with foam and sweat, with its knees broken, and in a deplorable plight.

"He told the *garçon écuyer* that he had had a bad fall hunting, and hurriedly left the courtyard, and rushed up stairs.

"When he had shut the door of our apartment, he threw himself into a chair, and bade me fetch wine. He drank repeated draughts of the noble vintage of that country until he became fearfully excited.

" 'Come,' said he ; ' Chaumelin, a toast—fill a bumper. Vengeance ! and may the end be as successful as the beginning. The tiger waits patiently crouching for its prey, but he catches it at last, and sucks its heart's blood. See, Chaumelin !' he cried, drawing his rapier from its sheath, ' see ! This good steel is dull—very dull. There is something on it. Look ! I kiss it. Its very odour is perfume in my nostrils. Drink, Chaumelin !—It is the heart's blood of my rival ! She who preferred him living, may lie on his breathless body till it rots—her spouse and her child— a good day's work ! Are there any more of the viper's brood to crush ? Drink, Chaumelin—drink, I say !—another bumper ! Death and infamy to all who bear the accursed name of De la Motte !—death to all the rest, and infamy to her !—but first she must be mine, and mine she shall be, in spite of heaven or hell !'

"The Marquis poured nearly half a bottle of wine into a goblet, and drank it off at a draught.

"The effect on him was a strange one. He sank into a chair: his eye lost its flashing brightness—its malignity. His voice softened, and his features relaxed from their ferocious scowl, and he said, softly :

"‘Do you know, Chaumelin, that I still love this woman? Strange! passing strange!—is it not? but, nevertheless, true. Love and hate so closely blended! Can your philosophy, Chaumelin, account for this? Ah! had she but loved me, I might have turned from my evil ways, and become a Christian. I should not have been tempted, by the curse of poverty, to strive and rebuild my fortunes at the gaming-table. O, Eugenie! Eugenie! behold your work! see to what your scorn has brought me!’ and the haughty Marquis buried his face in his hands, and for one moment relented of his fell purpose; but when he looked up again, his eyes were lighted up with the same fierce fire as before. He drank deeply, but the wine seemed to have little effect upon his brain, and before he

remained in the night he told me what had occurred in the wood.

"My master quitted Marseilles early next morning, taking the transfer he had purchased for me, leaving me to make such inquiries about the boy as I deemed safe, and to watch the movements of the widowed lady; but whether he went and for what purpose, I know not to this day. My efforts were very unsuccessful. The lady had never returned to the château.

"I hastened down to the little seaport-town of Fréjus, and there all I could discover was that a *général* had sailed early in the morning for Genoa, and that a female, closely veiled, had gone on board her with a foreign gentleman. Of the boy I could hear nothing. The body of the slaughtered man was found, and a *procès verbal* was made of the circumstances; but so mysterious did the whole affair appear in the eyes of the authorities, that they were completely bewildered. The state of the grey horse might have excited some uneasiness, but I managed skillfully to turn all suspicion aside from the real perpetrator of the deed, and it naturally fell on

a fugitive foreigner, who was discovered to be an Englishman.

"That very evening my master returned—we sold the horses, and in a few days embarked in a vessel for Genoa. But I feel that I should tell you, were I to recount the events and strange vicissitudes of this extraordinary chase. It must be brief.

"They escaped us at Genoa, at Rome they were protected by some powerful influence, and then in spite of all opposition the Marquis had revailed against them, they had fled in disguise to Naples. There they were married under false names. Soon we were on their track, true bloodhounds.

"The Marquis was mad with rage and spite, and thirsting for blood.

"There was no difficulty in finding a ready hand and a keen stiletto. The Englishman was imprudent, he was watched, but just as the trigger's point was touching his body, a man, in the dress of a contadino, struck the bravo a violent blow on the head with a stick, and the Englishman escaped. He took alarm and fled

by sea suddenly, and before we were prepared for it. Again we were on the track. Monsieur, you can have no idea of the wild excitement of this chase even to me : what must it then have been to my master ?

“ For a long time we missed the fugitives ; hearing of them here, losing all trace of them there. Now in Italy at a seaport, now in the mountains of Switzerland. At length, we came to Hamburgh, but not until nearly a year had elapsed since we began the chase, and there we heard that an English gentleman and a French lady were married at a Lutheran church that very morning and had sailed immediately, but no one knew for what part of the world. We embarked, at a venture, for England, concluding, naturally enough, that island to be their destination, but there we entirely lost all trace.”

“ O, God ! ” exclaimed Arthur, forgetting in whose presence he was, “ they were married then—legally married. Oh ! shame on my weak folly. I, the rightful owner of Morley, gifted with all good things, to fly like a branded felon

because a false girl frowned on my boyish love. O, Edith! had you loved me —”

“She loved you,” seemed to come as an answering echo.

Arthur started, and recollecting himself, said, sternly: “Did you speak, Sir?”

“I said that she did love you, Monsieur.”

“Take care, Sir—take care, you are treading on a mine,” said Arthur, in a low but fierce tone.

“I have nothing to lose, Monsieur, if it is fired,” replied Marinier, calmly. “I wish but to tell the truth openly and sincerely.”

“You shall render me an account for these words, Sir; and if they were lightly spoken, it were better for you that they had never been uttered.” The spirit of revenge first called up before the ruins of La Belle Étoile was whispering to him.

“Allow me to observe, that if you will have patience, Captain Conway, to hear me out, you will find that I have a good and sufficient reason for what I have said.”

“I am not one to use threats. But let me

impress upon your mind, that I am no longer to be trifled with. It is your own work, and the consequences will fall on your own head."

"I am sorry to have offended you, but I speak the truth."

"Go on," said Arthur, calmly: the cloud had passed away.

"I must hurry over the long period that ensued, before we again heard of the fugitives. There is a gap which you, Monsieur, can probably fill up."

Arthur nodded assent.

"The Marquis was utterly ruined, he had not a sou left to buy food. What induced him, I know not, but he took the vows, and entered the Society of Jesus. Such a man was a welcome proselyte. He soon became an Abbé, and changed his name, with his altered condition, to that of the Abbé Latouche, and entered zealously into the views of that Order. To the world he was an altered man, but to me he was still the Marquis de Charolles.

"The Revolution came like a thunderbolt. He would not, though he was sorely tempted,

join the *sans culottes*. A man of his unscrupulous views, of his determination, activity, and energy, might have raised himself above the crowd; but his pride restrained him.

“Then came the dissolution of the religious orders. He had enemies, and, to avoid the guillotine, he fled to England, and I accompanied him.

“He had a little money by him when he arrived in the metropolis, but that soon went, and we were reduced to abject poverty, and existed miserably in a low lodging-house, in the part of London called Westminster; the Marquis (for he dropped the Abbé) earning a precarious livelihood by teaching fencing, which enabled him to use his address in gaming, in a small way, at low gambling-houses. Once or twice, he gained a tolerably large sum of money, and then he ventured to show himself in houses where deeper play was carried on. There he met with several old Parisian acquaintances, who, being in the same predicament as himself, were as unscrupulous in obtaining the means of a scanty subsistence.

“ One day, when we actually had not wherewithal to purchase a dinner, we were surprised by a visit from one of those men, whom the Marquis had previously known, when quite a young man, in the highest society in Paris. I need not mention his name, but it would seem that he was well acquainted with my master's disposition and previous history. He must also have succeeded in getting into some kind of society. They were closeted for some time. I listened, but they conversed in a low tone, and I heard nothing save the chink of gold. That spoke for itself: something was in the wind. At length the gentleman left, and the Marquis came back into the room where I was.

“ There was a strange sneering expression in his face, and a bitter smile curled his lip, as he said :

“ ‘ What think you, Chaumelin ? my priestcraft is to avail me at last in this heretical land. Ha ! ha ! the idea is a strange one ; but if it gives me means to purchase pleasure, it is welcome. Chaumelin, have you forgot your religious exercises ? Can you act as my assistant in administering a sacrament ? ’

“ ‘ Certainly,’ I replied, ‘ my master, if anything is to be gained by it ; but it will first be necessary to get your robes out of pawn.’ ”

“ ‘ Ha ! I forgot that,’ replied the Marquis, throwing down a piece of gold on the table ; ‘ go and redeem them, and buy what is necessary to make the farce complete.’ ”

“ I was absent some time, and when I returned, I found the Marquis pacing up and down the little room, evidently in great agitation. ‘ Do you believe in the doctrine of chances, Chaumelin ?’ said he, with an absent air. ‘ Why do you ask, master ?’ I inquired. ‘ Because I am convinced, Chaumelin, that this unexpected piece of fortune will end in a grand *coup*. Here we are reduced to our last sou, without a hope for the future. In comes a man, and gives me five guineas as an earnest. ‘Tis like doubling your last piece at the gaming-table ; if the run lasts, we will break the bank.’ ”

“ ‘ May it be so,’ said I.

“ Evening came, the robes were packed up in a bundle, with the sprinkling brush, a taper, and a phial of oil ; and the Marquis, directing

It is a house, and I am sure it is a house
 in the heart of the world with the people under
 it.

It is a house, and I am sure it is a house
 in the heart of the world with the people under
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the cause of this was a secret. On your recovery you left Oxford, and went down to the Grange, whither your uncle had preceded you, leaving the Marquis in London to watch his interests. Indeed, my master did not wish to quit the metropolis just then, so he sent me into Devonshire as a spy on your actions. I quickly discovered that Sir Walter Conway had a daughter, whom he had never mentioned. I watched you, and followed you to the stream, where you became the accepted lover of your cousin Edith. The Baronet had acted wisely and prudently, in permitting, or rather ordering this to be, but I knew that it would not suit my master's intentions. So I despatched a letter immediately to warn him of the intended match. Do you know, Monsieur, at that time it would have taken but very little to have made me turn round, and throw my master over?

“The Marquis was furious when he heard this; for if the union should take place, it would entirely frustrate all his plans of revenge, and all hope of making his fortune from the secret he had gained. All his power over the

owner of Morley would be lost. The match must be prevented at any price.

“ You had quitted Morley to return to Oxford, happy and contented, caring for nothing but your love. The family removed to Morley, and the Marquis soon came down from London and was regularly domiciled in your uncle’s house. I kept out of the way, living obscurely, and under a feigned name at Plymouth. A cause was tried, and it went against you, but of this perhaps you are not aware, for it was undefended. Gradually the Marquis obtained a complete ascendancy over your uncle—so complete, that he soon induced him to forbid his daughter from thinking of you otherwise than a friend. I heard there were some terrible scenes; but it ended in her giving her promise to that effect, and the Marquis left the place. I was called from Plymouth to act as his substitute, as he did not wish to appear.

“ You returned to Morley. It was summer time.

“ Do you remember one day you were fishing in the trout-stream that runs through the

park. It was a lovely evening. A soft westerly breeze driving the golden tinted clouds upwards from the gorgeous setting sun, over the deep blue sky."

A sad sigh burst from Arthur's heart.

"A pretty black-eyed girl came tripping lightly over the grass to the banks of the stream where you were casting your line on the water. You did not hear her till she was close to you—what a start you gave. Two men were watching you, I was one, the other was the girl's lover, a rough young sailor. He had come to see her and had met me accidentally, and had told me his errand. I bade him watch, and he would repent of his love—his jealousy caught fire like dried cedar chips."

"In God's name, what was this for?" cried Arthur, in amaze.

"To raise up an enemy against you. The war was begun."

"She approached you, you threw your rod down and hastened to meet her. 'A concerted meeting,' I whispered to the sailor. He cursed

me, and bade me hold my tongue, and use my eyes. You conversed for some time, and then wandered away up the glen, and for a few minutes we lost sight of you. When we again discovered you, you were lying on the grass with your head pillowed on her lap, and she was crying, and wringing her hands, and kissing you. The jealous sailor saw but the last, though I understood the whole scene. You had fainted from excess of anguish, and she was trying to restore you to your senses. Why she kissed you I know not; but nothing could have suited my purpose better. The sailor was frantic. He swore that you had robbed him of his mistress; that she was faithless, and he would be revenged. I knew not then to what use we should turn him, but you had gained an enemy.

“ I saw you recover, and hasten towards the house. What happened then neither of us knew, but as I saw you rush from it a short time afterwards, aghast, and in the utmost disorder, and hasten to the village of Morley, where

you shut yourself up until the stage-coach stopped at the little inn, I concluded that you had met with the anticipated refusal."

"It was there that my man Ellam saw you, I suppose?"

"Yes, Sir ; I must have been somewhat careless, but my errand had evidently been successfully accomplished. You had fled.

"And now, Sir, I suppose you understand why your cousin refused, after accepting your devoted love. Think not it was because you were not the owner of Morley, nor because she did not love. It was to save her father from disgrace and ruin.

"No impediment was placed in your way when you wished to enter the army ; on the contrary, I know that Sir Walter used his utmost interest to forward your views, for they exactly suited those of the Marquis, and his delight was great when you chose to enter a regiment in the West Indies. Still, the Marquis did not desire your death ; his thirst for revenge was unsatisfied.

"At the end of the year '94, we heard that

owing to the numerous casualties from fever, and the bullets of the French, so much promotion had taken place in your regiment, that a company might be obtained by interest and money, provided you were ready to go out immediately: we used the interest of Sir Walter for this, and to get the man Diver appointed to command the transport in which you were to sail, and from him we learnt the probable time of your sailing for the Windward Islands, which we discovered to be your destination, and that you were to embark at Plymouth.

“ It was then arranged that I should precede you there, to which I offered no objection, as I was tired of England, and wished for employment. The Marquis was liberal, and supplied me with plenty of money. His time had not come, and he trusted me implicitly.

“ I was at Barbadoes when the transport arrived there. Having met Captain Diver, as agreed upon before we left England, I found that you were to go on to Dominica. I hired a fast-sailing schooner, and ran down there in less than two days.

"I had not long landed before I discovered that a wide-spread and dangerous conspiracy was on foot to deliver up the island to the Republican leader, Victor Hugues. This seemed a splendid opening, and I took advantage of it. I took the oath, and thus it was that I fell in with Monsieur Le Blanc, as he was then called. It was I who induced him to send the *Carib* on board the 'Sally' to glean intelligence. It was I who gave him such hints about you and Captain Diver, that he ventured on board himself to get this rough sailor to assist us. What happened subsequently, and how I have failed, you know. A Providence seemed to watch over you, and everything connected with your lot. Even the young man, François Devrien—"

"What of him?" said Arthur, eagerly—he had not caught the name of Le Blanc.

"He is the son of your mother, Monsieur, therefore your half-brother, and his real name is François de la Motte."

"But," said Arthur, musingly, "if she married her cousin, being a Protestant, and he

a Catholic, they come within the prohibited degrees, and he would be illegitimate."

"Pardon me, Monsieur, he, too, was a Protestant; and before I quitted Paris, I discovered that they were legally married before their flight."

Marinier, however, evidently did not like being questioned regarding François, probably because he hated and feared him. So he continued, somewhat abruptly: "Now, Sir, prepare yourself for strange and bad tidings."

Arthur looked fixedly at him, but he did not shrink! and the words came from Marinier's lips calmly and deliberately. "Your cousin, Edith Conway, is to be married to the Marquis de Charolles, the priest and the assassin."

"It is false!" cried Arthur, starting up, the fire flashing from his eyes—his lips compressed together and his whole frame quivering with intense emotion. "It is false—false as hell! See you not, vile man, you have betrayed yourself. I see the desperate game you are playing, but it will not succeed."

"Will you allow me," replied Marinier,

meekly, "to assure you of the fact and produce my proofs?"

"Prove this you shall, vile traitor as you are: think you, I can trust your word? Prove it, or by heaven the sharks shall feed on your loathsome carcass."

Marinier, without replying a word, produced from his breast the crumpled letter he was reading when the Carib came into the cave to hasten his dressing, and unfolded it slowly and deliberately.

"What is that?" said our hero, impatiently, "some new device?"

"It is a letter from the Marquis de Charolles to me; and it will prove my assertions to be true. Will you allow me to read it? It is in French. Shall I translate it?"

"No; it may be garbled," said Arthur, contemptuously. "Go on, Sir."

Marinier's eye kindled for a moment, but his voice was still calm as he read the letter, which we have, however, rendered into English.

"I have completely overcome her scruples

about the young man, thanks to your able assistance. Your letter, and the paragraph in the local paper, relative to the young lady at Dominica, have had more effect than threats, coaxings, or insinuations. As she believes that he no longer loves her, and she knows that her father is in my hands, she will do anything to save his honour ; and he has urged the necessity of this alliance in forcible terms, at my desire. He is breaking fast, and I must have a strong hold before he quits this world. What a different one, is it not, my friend, from the wretched time we spent in the gloomy garret in that vile city ? and better still, the old man has made his will, and I have seen it. Everything is left to her ; you see, there is expediency as well as love in this affair. I think I love her, for I am not yet too old for *la belle passion*. The young man must be kept out of the way for some time longer ; I leave that to you. Should he be rash enough, however, to visit this part of the world, I am prepared for him ; he will not stay here long. Indeed, I have left very little to chance, and could I but find the missing paper, all would be right. Don't be shocked,

my friend, when I tell you I have turned Protestant ; how sweet the wedding bells of the little church will chime—will they not ?

“ I wish the boy could hear them ; how the sound would wring his heart ! I suppose he still loves her. I know how hard it is to conquer first love, till hate steps in, and imprints the glorious everlasting feeling of vengeance on the soul, if soul there be. Love can be satiated ; hate endures for ever. Talk of the joys of love, what are they to the ecstasy of revenge ?

“ And yet—and yet it were well, perhaps, that it should be out of his power ever to visit England again. Surely, in such scenes and times as you describe, it must be an easy matter to dispose of him. Have you no Algerines ? Look to it. I shall not quarrel with you, if he disappears from the scene.

“ Edith and he must never meet. I have taken good care that no letters leave this, without my consent ; yet women are difficult and wayward things to manage, and a few words, written or spoken, a look, a sigh, may change the whole current of their thoughts and actions : so they must not meet. What-

ever happens, if he has not wings to fly with, he can never reach this before we are married, and then I defy him. Should he escape your toils, he will fall into mine. On the 1st of November drink to my health—you understand me—I send you the wherewithal. Spare it not. When the deed is accomplished, you, my friend, shall share with me. We have seen much misery together; let us try and enjoy life while we may. After all, what is this world without money?

“Farewell!”

“The 1st of November! My God! there is yet time to save her!”

“True, Monsieur; that is why I so much wished to see you.”

Had our hero not been so completely wrapped up in Edith’s melancholy fate, these words that escaped, as it were, involuntarily from Marinier’s lips, might have excited fresh suspicion. As it was, the effects of the disclosure of this horrible conspiracy against him, his mother, and Edith, had in some measure lost their first pang.

Arthur said:

"Pardon me, Sir, if I have become suspicious. I must have further proof, first of your intentions towards myself, and then you must convince me of the genuineness of this letter. Will you let me see it?"

"Certainly, if Monsieur wishes it," replied Chaumelin, handing him the letter.

There was a date, May the 25th, and a Plymouth post-mark on it. It was directed to "Monsieur Chaumelin, care of Messrs. Stedman and Co., merchants, Dominica," and was signed "De Charolles." As we have said before, it was written in the French language. Arthur perceived at once that the letter was genuine, and returned it to Chaumelin without reading it. Had he done so carefully, he would have seen that the words "1st of November" were written over an erasure, but he might not have detected the fact that they were not in the same handwriting with the rest of the letter, so skilfully was it imitated.

Arthur was not appalled by this fearful revelation of crimes and treachery, for he scarcely as yet believed in their reality. His open mind could not readily grasp the idea of revenge

carried on through generations. The whole story seemed so unreal, so unnatural to him, that, until the production of this letter, he had made up his mind that more than half of what Marinier had told him was pure fiction. He was too young and inexperienced to know that the romance of real life often far exceeds its horrors and extraordinary events anything that the imagination and pen of the writer can dare to present before the eyes of the public, just as there are scenes and colours in nature beautiful and wonderful in themselves, but which the most skilful painter cannot transfer to canvas.

After a long pause, Arthur said :

"This, then, is your secret?"

"It was, before Monsieur heard it."

"And what do you expect for it?"

"I expect nothing, but hope much."

"You have owned that you are a hypocrite, why continue the folly of attempting to mask your wishes? Speak, man! What reward do you expect?"

"At present, my life and liberty. I meant to speak openly, and I will not say that I repent of what I have done, for that would be hypocrisy,

as you are pleased to call it, neither will I say that I do not hope for some reward from you, Monsieur, when you are in possession of your rightful estates. I am sick of being always on the losing side, and wish, as the thief makes the best thief-catcher, to be employed by you, now that I have failed and been detected. Reflect, Sir, that through me you may be able to prove your mother's lawful marriage with your father. There are documents in existence that can do it. Morley may yet be yours. The Marquis exposed, and —"

"Profane not her name, vile wretch!" said Arthur, angrily. "Remember you have shown me what a villain you are, and how little you are to be trusted."

"Nay, Captain Conway, you must own that I have been a faithful servant to the Marquis whilst I had the power to be so."

"Yes, in every species of wickedness; but now, when you would turn and do good, I fear your treacherous nature."

"You wrong me, Captain Conway, indeed you wrong me. The drowning wretch catches at straws: I, to save myself, volunteered to disclose

this secret. I am too great a coward to wish to die. It was the fear of that—and I confess I deserved it—that made me do what I have done, otherwise, think you that I should have revealed this dreadful plot? Would it have been to my benefit to have done so? No. Could I have gained life and liberty at any other price, it would have been far preferable; but one cannot serve two masters. I chose the one who could give me life, with a prospect of a large reward in the vista of futurity.”

“All this is very plausible, and, indeed, not improbable,” replied Arthur; “but I want more proofs.”

“And more you shall have,” said Marinier, eagerly; and he felt in his breast for his pocket-book.

With a cry of horror, surprise, and alarm, he withdrew his hand. It was not there. He felt his person all over with one hand, then with both. He shook himself; but all in vain. It was not there.

He did not faint; but a cold, clammy sweat, bedewed his forehead, his face became fearfully pale, and his limbs shook convulsively, yet his

memory was busy within him. Had he left it in the cave with his rags? no, he had it safe in the canoe when it ran alongside the vessel, for he had felt it then. Some one might have stolen it, when he was lying sick and helpless, during the storm, or he had dropped it in his berth. Into whose hands might it have fallen? His eye glanced furtively and savagely at our hero.

Arthur looked on in great surprise, and in perfect innocence. "What ails you, Sir?" at length, he said; "you look strangely at me."

Marinier uttered a hoarse, half-suppressed cry.

"The pocket-book, the paper; gone, stolen, lost," and rushed like a maniac out of the cabin to the deck. It was pitch dark, and he suddenly felt himself grasped by somebody.

"Hillo, my hearty, whither away. Can't stop to pick you up, if you go overboard; you were precious near it, I can tell you," said a gruff, but not ill-natured voice.

Marinier broke away from the sailor with a curse.

When our hero was thus suddenly left alone, he rang a hand-bell; it was promptly answered

by Ellam. Tom had, indeed, been just outside the door of the little cabin all the time Marinier had been in it. He had not forgotten the surgeon's instructions ; and though he did not believe that Marinier was bold enough to use any violence towards his master, he, nevertheless, deemed it prudent to be close at hand.

"You are quick, Ellam," said Arthur.

"Where do you come from?"

"From outside the door, Sir."

"Then you heard all?"

"Not a word, Sir. I did not listen, but I misdoubted that poaching vagabond. I was half afraid he might do you a mischief, Sir."

"No danger of that, Ellam ; but what has become of him?"

"He rushed by me, just now, Sir, like a chased hare, looking behind him, like. It's precious dark, Sir, but I have not heard a splash. He's not the sort to be drowned."

"The rascal has been telling me a strange story, Ellam."

"All lies, depend upon it, Sir."

"Would to God, I could think so. Yet, it is very strange that no letters of any kind have

come from Morley. My God! what a situation, if this wretch's words are true!"

A cold perspiration broke out on Ellam's forehead, and he muttered: "What mischief may I not have done!" and his look was so woe-begone and perplexed, that his master noticed it, and said:

"Is it possible, Ellam, that you have guessed what is in my hand."

"No, Sir, no," stammered the gamekeeper. "It is something I have done—that I should have been so forgetful! O, Sir! will you forgive me, I've had a letter for you in my pocket this many a day—Mr. Dallas told me not to give it you till you were quite well, and I forgot all about it till this moment."

"Never mind, Ellam, I dare say it is of no consequence."

"It's from Morley, Sir, and came by this ship."

"From Morley?" cried Arthur. "Where is it? Give it to me."

Tom Ellam produced a crumpled, dirty letter, sealed with the top of a thimble, badly folded, and worse directed.

Arthur looked at the direction, the handwriting was coarse and unknown to him—but it might be feigned. It was from Morley. Oh, how he dreaded its contents. His heart beat fearfully, and his hand trembled as he broke the seal.

He had not read five lines before Ellam was terribly startled to see his young master suddenly grow deadly pale, and fall fainting backwards on the couch. It was some time before he recovered his senses, and then he lay moaning and gasping out broken sentences.

While he is in this state let us take the author's privilege, and read the letter.

"Du, Master Arthur, for the love of God, cum back quick to England, Miss Edith and all is in an awful quandary. Miss Lou has left months ago. The Baronite is in a sad way, pallalitic I heard the doctors call him. Howsumever, Miss Edith is to be married in November to the foreign Markis who lords it here, and she hates him, so du you cum hoam, Master Arthur. The servants and old Ellam says they be sure as you are the lawful master

here if you got your rights. Lord love you, your dear mother always went to church, and she been lawfully married, so du cum hoam, Master Arthur—don't let Miss Edith marry the Markis, she oughten to be yours—he be a bad un surely. Old Ellam says there be bad uns, poachers and what not, in his pay—things is all topsy-turvy. I got over to Plymouth, and he know nout of it; and sent this by an old friend, he be second mate on boord the 'Emerald.' Hoping you will get it safe, and du cum hoame from them outlandish parts.

“I am,

“Dear Master Arthur,

“DINAH DERRICK.”

Arthur had borne up wonderfully during Marinier's confession, painful as it was to his feelings, for he did not place implicit faith in the truth of these startling revelations. There was an insincerity in Marinier's manner, and in all that he said, although he strove to be frank and open. But this letter from the faithful servant completely overwhelmed him, for it confirmed Marinier's statement in every particular.

Here was no loophole by which hope might creep in and declare them false. Edith Conway! his cousin! once his affianced! to be married to a degraded priest, an assassin!

But look at Arthur. What a change has come over him in a few short minutes. What is it that has made the moanings cease? Why do we no longer hear the gasps and sighs that just now seemed to rend and tear his debilitated frame? Why do his eyes gleam so brilliantly under his knit-brows? What is it that closes his hands so forcibly, that the nails indent the flesh? Why are his lips so pale and his cheeks so flushed?

The spirit of vengeance once again.

No more the mangled corpses, the smoking ruins, and the blasted tree; no longer Marguerite and Rosalie; but fiercer and yet more terrible—his birthright, his mother, Edith, stolen, defamed, sacrificed. Vengeance again, prompt and terrible. But will it endure? Will not tears quench the flame?

“ Oh! my dear young master, if this be my fault, after all your bad luck, them niggers did me a bad turn in not killing me outright.”

"No," said Arthur, with a ghastly smile, "do not think for a moment that I blame you, Ellam. This could not have been given me at a fitter moment;" and he glanced again at the letter.

"Leave me now, Ellam; I would be alone; but keep an eye on that Marinier."

"Won't you take something, Sir? You look awful pale and scared like."

"Nothing, nothing; I'm better now: the shock is over. Leave me: I want to think."

The result of these thoughts will appear; therefore we will not dwell upon them, nor upon the fitful dreams that haunted him all that night, as he lay on the couch from which he never moved until the morning broke; when Ellam came in and informed him that the vessel was at anchor in Carlisle Bay.

CHAPTER VI.

A SOLITARY brigantine is dashing gaily over the white-capped waves. Cast your eyes round the horizon. She is alone on that waste of waters.

It is a soft October day, with a light south-westerly breeze, driving the pure white gauze-like clouds, which have risen imperceptibly from the horizon, across the vast concave beneath the pale-blue vault of heaven, down to leeward, until they melt in the distant purple haze.

The air is warm and bland, but not oppressive.

Wrapt in a boat-cloak, a pale and delicate-looking young man is lying on the deck of the

vessel, near the stern. He is apparently just recovering from a severe illness.

A tall, athletic figure, but of an inferior station in society, is standing by his side, leaning against the bulwarks. He is dressed as a sailor, but is evidently not one, for his carriage is too stiff and upright. His manner, as he listens to the recumbent figure, is respectful and attentive.

The vessel is the 'Emerald;' and the two men, Arthur Conway and the quondam game-keeper and soldier, the faithful Tom Ellam, the younger.

"Ellam," said Arthur, in a low, sweet voice, "you have nursed me tenderly through a second tedious sickness: how shall I ever repay you?"

"I don't care for nothing, Sir, so long as I see you well and happy," replied the game-keeper, sturdily.

"Remember, Ellam," continued our hero, "we are no longer the officer and the private, the master and the servant; but friends—friends for life, Ellam."

"Don't, if you love me, Master Arthur,

speaking in this way; it puts me out terrible. I know my station; and there, Master Arthur, I'll stick to you through life and death, if need be; but I will not be one of those liberty and equality chaps. You are my young master by rights, as you was my officer; and so you will ever be, whether you get Morley or no."

"Still you can be my friend, Ellam, I want one sadly."

"Well, Master Arthur, I've no objection to that, provided you don't put me on a level with yourself. I am your faithful servant and I ever will be: so you can say what you please before me, Master Arthur, and I'll make so bold as to speak free."

"Well then, Ellam, I begin to think that I have been rather rash in throwing up my profession in this sudden way—yet what could I do? It may be ruin to me to be hampered in any way even for an hour, and to be entirely free I was forced to sacrifice my commission."

"Beg pardon, Sir, you did the wisest thing you could do; you never could have rested after what you heard from that poaching Frenchman."

"Ay, but what if this tale of Marinier's

should be a fabrication? Dinah Derrick's letter a forgery? How utterly I shall have been befooled! What will men say when they see in the "Gazette" the name of my successor, *vice* Conway resigned, in the height of war time too? Shall I not be marked, pointed at as a coward, a deserter? Then, Ellam, what a villain I shall seem! even now, whichever way I turn, whatever I do, I must appear a villain, a false, mean, pitiful, cowardly villain! Marguerite, sweet confiding Marguerite, I thought not of you in the wild confused turmoil of my fevered hastiness, you who have suffered so much and never repined, you who have trusted with your whole pure heart in my sincerity, my love! O, God! my love! Think of that, Ellam—think of that fair innocent confiding girl, loving as she does with her first unselfish all-absorbing passion, one who has plighted her his troth in return so faithfully, that he severs it in a few short months without a word of explanation—without a single parting adieu. There is silence in the grave, Ellam: she will think my love is dead and buried, and she will pine away and die, and I shall be her murderer."

The gamekeeper looked wisely at his young master as if he feared that his brain was still suffering from the effects of fever, for so indeed it seemed: but no, his eye was clear, his face pale, his brow calm, and he spoke in a low, sad, clear voice.

"Brighten up, Master Arthur," he said, cheerily. "for God's sake, don't take on so, and talk in this way. You are doing what is right, and be sure Miss Margaret will think so when she hears all."

"I ~~mean~~ speak, Ellam, for my thoughts are torturing me, and it is a relief to give them vent: and you, Ellam, are the only friend I have. The misery and sickness I have endured have, I fear, made me very weak both in body and mind, and I cannot but look upon my acts as showing it. Have I not basely deserted my duty a second time, and sacrificed a happy, loving, innocent being to my impetuous folly in too readily believing a story full of suspicion?"

"That Marinier may be a liar as well as an infernal scoundrel," replied Ellam, confidently; "but I know the man well now, who brought Miss Derrick's letter—she gave it into his own hands, and I'll swear it is true what she says."

"May be so ; but I distrust that Marinier. By the bye, what became of him ?"

"He gave us the slip at Bridgetown, Sir, while you were up with the General. I suppose he had money by him, and bribed some of the sailors to let him go. I've had a long talk with the second mate, him as brought the letter from Plymouth, Sir, about it ; and he says there be plenty of crimps' shops, like the 'Blue Anchor,' at Bridgetown, where he got stowed away till we left."

"And why did he leave us, Ellam, do you think ?"

"Why, Master Arthur, putting two and two together, I guess he has gone back to Dominica, to look for the pocket-book he lost, and raved about so much ; why, he offered a matter of fifty dollars, as a reward for it, afore he gave us leg bail."

"And so it has not been found ?"

"And never will be, I'm thinking, till doomsday, without the dark chap picked it up. But there's one consolation, Master Arthur : if that hard, old Scotch Major catches hold of him, he'll hang him, as sure as eggs is eggs ;

and I would not mind tying the knot myself—the poaching vagabond!”

“And so, Ellam,” continued Arthur, pursuing his own train of thought, while his servant was probably picturing, in his mind’s eye, Marinier hanging from the branch of a mango-tree, “you think that I was right?”

“Certain—sure of it, Master Arthur; and what is more, it has saved your life. Mr. Dallas, God bless him! will be quite glad when he hears of it.”

“Ay, he, at least, will do me justice: he will know why I have taken this step; but how will he hear of it?”

“I made so free, Sir,” replied Ellam, with great humility, “as to write a line to him from Barbadoes, when you took so ill again. I hope I did not take a liberty, but I did not like that anything should be said against you behind your back.”

“Thank God! thank God! she will hear the truth, for he is sure to see her. O, Ellam! did not I say you were my true friend. Why, oh, why, should I, who am not conscious of having offended any one, have such bitter enemies?”

"But you have a many friends, too, Master Arthur. I'm sure, there is not one, who knows you well, who would not go through fire and water to serve you; look at the soldiers, they showed it clear enough; they will miss you sadly, poor fellows. Them dark chaps, too, I don't mean the niggers—but them Indians; then, Mr. Dallas, and the French Captain—him as was taken prisoner. Lord love you, Master Arthur, you have heaps of them."

"Ah! but I have run away from them, on a wild speculation. O, heavens! that I should have to return to my own dear country on such an errand. To fight such a fight under the shade of those dear old oaks; what a welcome for a stricken man!"

"Never fear, dear Master," replied Ellam, taking him in a literal sense; "we will make it all right, when once we get to Morley. If that foreign Markis has bad ones and poachers in his pay; there is my old father still living, I suppose. I'll set him to work, and with them, as I know of myself, we'll get plenty of Devonshire lads, good and true, to thrash the whole gang. I'm not Devonshire myself; but I can fight, too, and will."

"But suppose, Ellam, I come too late; suppose I find them already married. The murderer! the Popish priest! the enemy of my race! the profligate slanderer! clasping in his foul embrace my cousin Edith; what should I do? Speak freely, Ellam."

"Make her a widow, Master Arthur," quietly replied the gamekeeper.

"Ellam, you do not know what you are prompting me to; your words are like sparks to gunpowder. God forgive me for harbouring such thoughts, they seem all tinged with blood. Oh! may we be in time to prevent this accursed marriage, and then they will no longer haunt me. What day of the month is this, Ellam? for I have forgotten: day and night have passed away in my sickness alike, unheeded and unknown."

"This is the 21st of October, Master Arthur; and I heard the Captain say, when he was shooting the sun yesterday, that we was off the Azores, and if this wind held, we should sight the Lizard in seven or eight days."

"God grant it may be so," replied Arthur, solemnly.

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But, alas! the Captain was not a true prophet; for when nearly in sight of the English coast, so severe an easterly gale sprang up, that the 'Emerald' was obliged to lay-to for three days.

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The 1st of November! a dark, dreary, gusty day. The old oak-trees are sighing and moaning, and the dead leaves are whirling about in the air.

The bells of the little village church of Morley are ringing a merry chime, and the hands of the clock in the square tower are both together. Twelve o'clock is striking.

There has been an unusual bustle in the village. The miller has left his mill; the blacksmith's hammer rests against the anvil; the wheelwright's shed is empty; the butcher, with his big dog; the rat-catcher, with his terriers; the baker, all powdered with flour; have all gone up the street: but at this moment they are all congregated about the 'Deverell Arms.' Some are in the tap, drinking cider; others are loitering about the porch, and criticising, in uncouth phraseology, a travelling carriage, with

four horses, which has just arrived. The postilions, gaily dressed, are taking out the horses, and putting them up at the stable of the little inn. There is a steam rising from the bodies of the animals, as if they had travelled fast and far; fast they have come, but not far; only from the inn at Plymouth, a short seven miles.

Two men, dressed as sailors, pass hurriedly through the village. Their faces are closely muffled up; but no disguise is necessary—no one notices them. They go up the hill, on the high road to London; at the top of which the road from Morley Hall joins. The lodge-gates are wide open, and they enter the park.

They seem to know their way perfectly, for shortly they strike off from the carriage-road, down a narrow footpath, through a thick belt of wood, into an open space, where, covered with late-blowing roses and fragrant myrtles, stands a neat and pretty thatched cottage. The door is open, and, as they approach, three or four spaniels rush out, barking and yapping; but presently they begin to smell round the strangers, and one jumps up and whines, and then another, and another, running between them,

and fawning first on one, then on the other, and yelping with delight.

"Down, Jet, Fan, Flash, I tell you, down," said the taller of the two men, patting their sleek, silky heads, and entering the cottage; whilst the other man remained outside.

A tall, grey-headed man, old in years, but still stalwart and upright, came from the back part of the inside of the cottage, and met the intruder in the passage. The stranger's back was towards the light; and the old man, not recognising him, said, somewhat sharply: "What dost thee want, my man?"

"How be you, father?" was the laconic reply of the son, holding out his hand.

"What, Tom—Tom, my boy, is that thee?" said the old man, grasping the outstretched hand, and wringing it with a will. "Oh, my old heart be indeed glad to see thee. I never thought to look upon thy face again, Tom;" and a tear trickled down the old man's cheek. "But, Tom, surely Tom, thou hast not been and deserted thy colours; thee hast not left young Master Arthur in the lurch, in them outlandish parts," and he let go the hand he had

all the time held in his. "If thee hast, thee art no son of mine."

"Is the coast clear, father?" replied the son. No poachers lurking about, eh? No queer ones within earshot? I've something to tell you."

"Not a soul, Tom; they are all up at the Hall, gatekeeper and all. There be casks of cider and ale broached for them that likes it."

"And why ar'n't you there, father?"

"What's that to thee, boy?"

"Don't be grumpy, father. I knows all about it. Miss Edith's wedding don't please you, that's it. There's one other don't fancy it much neither. May he come in?"

"Who, Tom?"

"Master Arthur, to be sure."

"Be he come hoam? Dang it! I be right glad of that."

"He is outside the cottage now, playing with the dogs. I'll call him in, as there's no one here but you."

Old Ellam was sincerely rejoiced to see his favourite young pupil once more beneath his roof. He, for one, had always looked upon

Arthur as the rightful heir of Morley. He had never believed the report of his illegitimacy, and somehow, he certainly could not exactly tell why, had always expected that he would come home and claim his rights when the storm that had driven him from his native country should have blown over; and it was he who had concocted the letter which Dinah Derrick had written, for, alas! he could not write himself. There was, however, no time afforded him now for explanation, for Arthur was intent upon what he had in hand. Old Ellam installed him in an arm-chair before the fire, and made him a warm drink before he would listen to anything, for he saw that he was faint and chilled.

Then a consultation was held between the three. It was soon settled that old Ellam should go up at once to the Hall, and try and see Edith in private, and give her a note from our hero. The note was quickly written on a scrap of paper, and consisted but of a few words:

“Edith, in the name of God, come at once with old Ellam to the keeper’s lodge. I am

there, and must see you. Delay will be utter ruin to all !

“ Your cousin,

“ ARTHUR CONWAY.”

When the old gamekeeper had departed on his errand, Arthur fell into deep thought. He sat perfectly still, looking at the fire, as if in the fantastic shapes of the red-hot cinders he might read his future destiny. Young Ellam did not attempt to disturb his dream-like trance, but busied himself in lighting a fire in the little floor-sanded parlour of the cottage.

The church-clock struck one before old Ellam returned.

Arthur started up when he entered.

“ Have you seen her, Ellam ? Tell me quickly. How is she ? how did she look ? what did she say ? will she come ? ”

“ I knew where to find Dinah, Master Arthur, so I looked her up first, and gave her your note for Miss Edith. I didn't tell her it was from you, for fear it might scare her, but I said it was to be given directly to her young missus. Whether she guessed the truth I don't

know, but she was off like a shot, and Miss Edith was in in a minute, looking very poorly, Master Arthur, and her eyes were very red, as if she'd been crying bitterly, poor thing! But she gave me such a look as she said :

“ ‘ Is my cousin Arthur indeed come, Ellam ? Is he here ? ’

“ ‘ Yes, Miss Edith, ’ I replied, ‘ he is surely —Master Arthur and son Tom are in the keeper’s lodge at this blessed minute. ’

“ She seemed to think a minute, afore she said : ‘ Go back, Ellam, at once—tell him I will come and see him as soon as it is safe. ’ ”

“ Thank God, she will come ! ” said Arthur, solemnly.

CHAPTER VII.

A LIGHT step was heard, and a female figure, wrapt in a large cloak, came hurriedly up to the door of the keeper's lodge.

Arthur flew to meet her, but he started back involuntarily as the lady threw back the hood and disclosed her features.

It was his cousin Edith, but, oh! how changed. Her face was deadly pale, save a slight hectic spot on each sunken cheek: her eyes shone with an unnatural brilliancy from the dark purple shade beneath them; her lips were thin and colourless, and the hand that she held out to Arthur was white, and cold, and corpse-like.

Arthur shuddered as he led her pale and

trembling, into the little sanded parlour. There was no greeting, and the first words that Arthur spoke were these :

“Edith ! Edith ! I have come to save you.”

“Too late, too late, Arthur,” almost shrieked the unhappy girl. “I am married.”

There was a strange expression in Arthur’s eyes as she said these words. It was not love, it was not pity, it was not jealous hate, but a compound of all three that gleamed in that expressive glance, Edith saw it and shuddered, but she continued speaking. “Alas, alas ! two hours—two short hours ago you might have saved me—but now my doom is fixed—I cannot change it. God have mercy upon me.”

“Edith, Edith ! listen to me,” broke in our hero abruptly. “Your marriage is no marriage—it is null and void, a very cheat, an empty mockery. The accursed villain who—”

“Oh, spare him, Arthur, spare him, I beseech, I entreat you ! He is my husband, and I have sworn to love and honour him.”

“I tell you, Edith,” continued Arthur, almost fiercely, “that the man who has dragged you to the altar is an assassin, a perjurer, a—”

"Oh, spare him, Arthur, spare him!" cried Edith again frantically.

"No, you must hear me—it must be told," and his voice sank to a hissing whisper. "He is a Popish priest—a Jesuit. It is no marriage by any laws human or divine."

"God help me, this is too horrible," murmured the unhappy girl, sinking into a seat, and burying her face in her hands. "Would I were dead."

"Nay, nay, dear Edith, look up, this ought to console you—do not talk of dying; be yourself, and all may yet be well."

But she did not look up. This startling communication bewildered her—she could but murmur: "Would I were dead, would I were dead!"

Arthur stood beside her, pale, but as yet resolved that things should take their course. He dared not trust himself to raise her drooping form. Not then for worlds would he have touched her.

At last, without looking up, she said:

"And you have come home to tell me this—you, whom I have so deeply wronged. My cup of misery was filling fast, and you, Arthur,

you to raise it to my lips. Ah, me! what have I done that I should thus suffer?"

"Do not reproach me, Edith—I am here to protect you—to save you from this cruel fate, not to add to your unhappiness. God knows I share in it myself. Be calm, dearest, be cheered: there are yet bright days in store for you."

"Too late, too late. No hope—no consolation, no refuge but in the grave."

"Say not so, Edith, I will unmask this villain. We will declare this marriage null and void—the law shall protect you, and I will avenge you. A murderer, a perjurer, a degraded priest, can never be Edith Conway's husband—and live," he added, in a low voice between his set teeth, a gleam of revenge lighting the cloud of sorrow.

Edith raised her head and threw back with her hand the disordered tresses that shaded her face, and looked at her cousin steadfastly. She said, firmly and bitterly:

"Do not mistake my position, Arthur: you are wrong. Whatever this man may have been—be he as vile as the lowest reptile that crawls the earth—be his hand dyed in blood till seas

would not wash out the stain—let him have broken as many oaths as there are stars in heaven, his priesthood is no longer an impediment to our marriage, for he has recanted, renounced his faith, to enter our Church. O, God! forgive him this sin. The contract is valid, and I am no longer Edith Conway but Edith de Charolles.”

“A last and crowning piece of audacious villany. But I will break it, and trample it to atoms: let the vile wretch triumph in it now, I have the means and knowledge to bring him low enough, even into the pit he has dug for others. Yes, I know all, Edith—all—even to where my mother was married: do you understand me, Edith? Morley is mine—was always mine. and shall be mine. Your father—”

Edith clasped her hands together and said, piteously:

“He is ill—so ill, he cannot live long. Oh, spare him. Arthur—him at least: he is still my father; if you ever loved me do not darken his last days.”

Arthur paused. He tried to look, to feel sternly, but her appeal went to his heart; still he said, firmly:

" On one condition only."

" Name it, Arthur, dear Arthur: I will fulfil it, even if it is my death."

" Edith, answer me one question. Has your father been the dupe of this villain?"

" Oh, I am sure of it. He is weak but would do nothing wrong. I know not how, but this man has gained so complete an ascendancy over my poor father, that everything seems his. Yet there is, there must be, some terrible secret between them. O, God! I scarcely know what to think."

" Then your father insisted on this accursed marriage at this man's instigation?"

" He did, he did; how can you doubt it? Am I reduced so low in your estimation? Why, Arthur, he threatened to curse me with his dying breath, if I persisted in refusing to marry this hateful man. He told me that ruin and dishonour would be the portion of his old age; that nothing but this could save him. I saw him wasting away; then I wrote to you to hasten home—to you, whom I had wronged. No answer came; still I procrastinated it day after day. No letter from you. Will you forgive

me, Arthur ? I thought you were offended, and still bore resentment against me, and cared not what became of your cousin. Then, though I heard not from you, I learned from others that you were well and happy, and about to wed a lovely creole girl ; your cousin Edith was forgotten."

It was Arthur's turn to become confused ; a crimson flush passed over his face, and his voice faltered, as he said : " You are partly right, and partly wrong ; no letter from Morley ever reached me till I had quitted Dominica. But, Edith ; I never forgot you—never, never. Day and night I have thought, I have dreamed of you ; yet—alas ! must I confess it ?—you had despised my love, and I, in my madness, sought consolation in the smiles of a fair and innocent being ; God forgive me, if I wronged her. What hope had I of obliterating your image, think you, Edith, when I rushed into such a crime, offering my heart to another, when it was no longer mine, and stealing away like a guilty being when it was accepted, because a faint hope had again dawned—I will not tell you how—that you had once loved me, Edith ? Oh, fatal knowledge, for it has come too late."

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"O, Arthur! hear me, I implore you. Do not let this cloud of error darken your right judgment, or turn you from the happier course you had begun. I loved you, Arthur, but as a dear, dear brother! True; I knew that your love for me was of a different nature; but I thought you were a boy, and that it would pass away like an April shower. I am punished for my perfidy in permitting you to love me. Oh! why did I not open your eyes, and show you my baseness? Perhaps I should have done so, but my father pressed, nay, insisted on my marrying you. It was then too late: I consented; O, God! It was no wonder that you thought I loved you. It was not my doing, dear Arthur; indeed, it was not. Yet, had we married, I should never have undeceived you, but have been a true and affectionate wife. Do you believe me, Arthur?"

Her cousin turned his head away, not in anger, it was but to hide a tear. She continued: "Then came a change over my father. He reversed the sentence. Arthur, I could have died for very shame. See, then, what follows—misery! degradation! and the grave! It is

yawning for me, and I do not wish to escape it. Oh! take warning, then, dearest Arthur! be not to that fair girl as I have been to you—a pitfall and a snare! love her, cherish her through life! Do not delay; seek her at once, lest her blood be upon your head and upon mine! Think, Arthur; were she to die—for such things are—who would have killed her? for her sake, for your own, for mine, return to her, and never quit her till she is your own! Leave me to my fate; pity me, and forget my unworthiness; and when I hear of your happiness I will bless you, Arthur, for listening to my words; and she shall be my sister, when I pray for those who are dear to me. Promise me this, dear Arthur, as if it were my last, and dying request—will you not?”

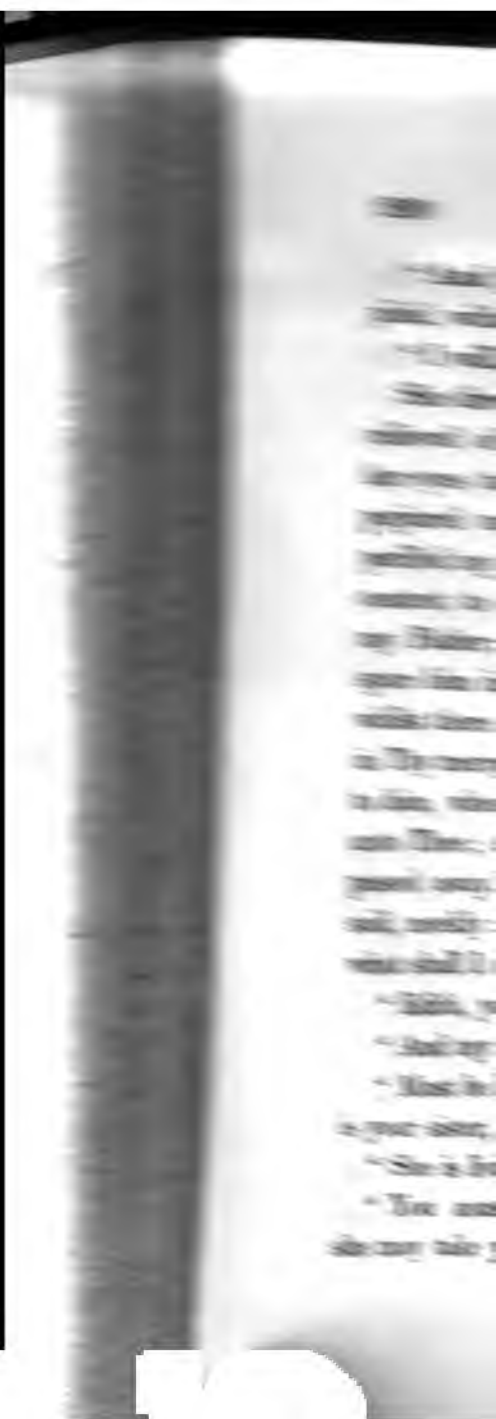
The hours were fast fleeting away; yet, for some minutes Arthur did not speak. She had never loved him, but as a brother. False! false as hell, Marinier's words! Oh, flattering hopes! oh, pleasing illusions! so abruptly dissipated. The scales had dropped from his eyes; oh, fool! fool! dupe of such shallow treachery! There was the reality of love; here but the

fiction of a ghastly phantom lost in the darkness of the past.

Marguerite, this was thy hour. Did thy young heart beat whilst thy rival pleaded for thee to thy fickle lover? Hadst thou known it, would it have beat no more? Happy in thy unconsciousness, thou dost but mourn his absence, ever trusting in his faith; for, in thy pure innocent heart suspicion dwells not, and now, even now, thou art triumphant—thy cause prevails.

Swiftly pass the fleeting minutes, but swifter far have thoughts arisen in Arthur's mind. Edith's words have conjured them up, perhaps too rapidly; they are a little bewildered, but now one absorbing idea prevails—Marguerite! He speaks.

"Edith,"—there is a pause, and the unhappy woman's heart scarcely beats; she is as pale as marble, and her breath seems scarcely to come and go. "If I consent to spare your father, for his life: if I must keep silence, and defer my vengeance, just and rightful as it is, for a time, you must never see this man again."



objection to that, if she does not object. The villain cannot marry her."

"But he will seek me out, wherever I may be found: he will claim me as his wife."

"Nay, Edith, I think not."

"Oh, you do not know him, Arthur. He is bold, daring, and yet crafty. I fear him, I dread his cunning; his very eyes look through you, and seem to read your soul."

"Edith, he shall not follow you," replied her cousin, with flashing eyes; but the fierce expression gave way to one of scorn, as he continued: "But I do not conceive that he will even attempt to seek you out, when he learns that you are penniless. Forgive me, dear Edith, for speaking so plainly; but your father is a ruined man, if I prosecute my claim."

"Alas! I fear it is so. Oh! my father, what has it profited you, that you have obtained the inheritance of another? What hath it been but a curse to you and your unhappy child? Oh! fatal day, that saw you take this devil into your counsel, to urge you to dishonourable deeds! Long have I suspected it; I would not believe it; but now, alas! I feel the truth, and its bitter consequences."

"He must not follow you, Edith. On that condition only I spare him, and he must know it. If he does not seek you, I promise to avoid him."

"But, Arthur, how am I to fly?"

"Everything is prepared for you when you are ready. I have not left it to chance, though chance has assisted me, for I had but few hours for reflection. Alas ! it was not decreed that I should arrive in time to save you from such misery. A gale sprang up in the channel, and detained the vessel, and I landed only this morning at Plymouth. I had not meant to conceal my arrival, so I went directly to the inn that I used once to frequent to obtain a conveyance to Morley. The landlord knew me at once, and told me that a carriage with four horses was about to start for Morley from his yard, to take you and your husband to the Grange. Edith, this was the first intimation of the fulfilment of your unhappy fate. I was too late to save you from the odious mockery of the ceremony, but not too late to prevent the consummation of this monster's villany. I did not hesitate. I told the landlord boldly that I wanted the carriage

myself, to carry a lady off from Morley ; that I had come home from the West Indies for that purpose ; and that I would pay him well if he gave me full command over the postilions to drive whatever road I might direct. He shook his head knowingly, and expressed very little surprise at my request, and only remarked that he feared I should be too late. No doubt he, as well as most others, looked upon me as the owner of Morley, or, at all events, as certain to inherit it. Whilst the horses were putting to, I obtained such money as is necessary for a journey, and, getting into the carriage, whilst Ellam sat on the box, I came in it as far as the turnpike, just outside Morley, and walked through the village with my face closely muffled up, that I should not be known. And now, if you are determined, Edith, to fly, I will send young Ellam to the ' Deverell Arms,' to order the postilions to be ready with the carriage at the lodge-gates directly, and he can accompany you. Edith, you may trust to him ; he is faithful and brave. But will not this Marquis be looking for you soon—will you not be missed ?”

“No, Arthur ; not for some hours, I think.

He was closeted with my father and his lawyer when I left the house, and he gave orders that no one should intrude on them before three o'clock, and the carriage was ordered at four; so there is plenty of time. The servants are all more or less intoxicated already, and the house is open."

"Old Ellam shall go up to the Hall again, and see your maid Dinah. She is quick, I know, and intelligent. No doubt, between them, they will be able to bring away what you may want for the journey. Old Ellam shall explain to her what you are going to do, and her woman's wit will act in this emergency quicker than a man's. You can trust her, Edith, can you not?"

"Oh, yes, dear Arthur."

"So be it, then. I will give the Ellams their instructions, if you have made up your mind to this final step. It would not do for me to accompany you, and I must watch this man."

"And I must leave my poor father to him O, Arthur! is there no other way? Must I go?"

"Do you already repent, Edith, of your determination?"

"Oh, no—no—no! Never, if I can help it, will I live under the same roof with a man so steeped in sin; but my father, my poor, stricken father! God help me! my senses are bewildered. I cannot judge what is right."

"It is in vain to veil the truth, dear Edith. With this man your father must stand or fall, and it rests on your decision. Heaven knows I have loved you deeply and sincerely, and fain would spare you the slightest pang; but there are bounds to love and endurance, Edith. If you return to the Hall, you must be his wife; then I could not forego my vengeance. But you will not—you cannot allow him even this momentary gleam of triumph. No, Edith, it must not be, even for your father's sake. Fly, and I will endeavour to get rid of this monster, and smoothen your father's declining path for the rest of his life. Stay, and ruin and dishonour will fall on this ill-fated family. Bethink you, Edith, with the knowledge I have gained, had I not loved you, how would the blow have fallen! I come to rescue you from misery and degrada-

tion. Believe me, dearest, I have no other motive."

"Oh, Arthur! I see the noble sacrifice you have made for me, undeserving and unworthy as I am of it: but it is a bitter pang to part from a father stricken with disease, and exposed to the malice of such an enemy, for so he will now be to him. Leave me a moment, dear Arthur, to myself. Let me pray to God to direct my choice."

Without saying a word, he quitted the room, and went into the kitchen, where the two Ellams were sitting by the fire. They both rose when he entered.

"She will consent," he murmured, "and there shall be no delay."

Without loss of time the two Ellams were despatched on their respective errands. Old Tom to the Hall to fetch away Dinah Derrick, and such things as were absolutely necessary for the journey, and the younger to the 'Deverell Arms,' to bring the carriage up from the village to the lodge gates.

When this was done, and the father and son had set out, Arthur knocked at the door—

there was no answer. He opened it. The unfortunate Edith was lying prostrate on the floor—she had swooned away. She is dead, was the momentary thought that flashed scorchingly on Arthur's brain. Oh! how the love he had once borne towards her, and which still lurked in his heart, started forth when he saw that breathless form. All his resolution vanished like the mists of the morning. She was Edith again, his once-loved Edith, not the wife of his bitterest foe. Dead! and he had killed her! His fate for ever doomed to be unfortunate!

He raised her, he chafed her temples, and imprinted a kiss on her pallid cheek. Thank God, she breathes, her eyes open, and he is not her murderer.

Edith shrank and shivered visibly when she recovered her senses, and found herself in her cousin's arms!

She released herself quickly, though she was so ill that she could scarcely hold up her head, and said, wildly, though her voice was faint:

"Touch me not, Arthur, I am a polluted, a degraded being. I have seen myself but just now as if in a mirror, and what did I behold?"

a woman clothed in the leprosy of sin. Can you, will you ever forgive me, Arthur, for the wrong I have done you? Woman, woman, beware how you trifle with the hearts of the young! This is a just punishment for my wickedness; but alas, alas! I am not the only sufferer, and I can make no atonement. Earth, take me to thy bosom, for the breath of heaven is contaminated by my presence."

"Edith, Edith," said Arthur, terrified at her words and manner, "do not speak so rashly. It is good for us to suffer. If we have erred, let us strive to repent and to do what is right."

"Arthur, I have prayed, but I have not found consolation. There seemed a hollow mockery in my addresses to the Creator, for my thoughts were full of earthly things. Everything appears false and unreal, even my prayers. What atonement can I make, how can I reconcile myself to my God?"

"Edith, I do not understand you."

"Heed me not, Arthur," she continued, more wildly; "but stay. Whilst there is yet time, learn a secret. Even whilst I coquetted with you, I loved another. He was untrue to me as

I to you, or think not, Arthur, I would have consented to wed this Marquis, even to save my father. Is not my soul full of leprosy, Arthur? Can you yet pity me?"

Arthur was terribly distressed and knew not how to answer. She mistook his silence, so full of sorrow, for angry and bitter thoughts. Tears again stood in her eyes, and she said, in accents of deep anguish:

"Dear cousin, I stand in need of forgiveness. Be merciful and bear with me. Let my sorrows plead for my sins: my burthen is hard to bear."

"Edith, dear Edith," he replied, "I have nothing to forgive. Would that I could turn your mourning into joy; but it seems the will of God that we should suffer. If your conscience, reproaches you, pray to Him, Edith, and He will make your burthen light. Pray for me, too, Edith, for my heart is full of bitterness; and I cannot relent of my purpose against this man."

"Nor do I wish it, dear brother," she replied, quickly. "Do not mistake me. I am ready to fly. His touch is pollution; his presence a loathing, now and for ever. It was but the keen pang of parting from my unhappy father that

afflicted me. It is over now, and I am prepared to do your will."

"You will write the letter, then, as I shall dictate," said Arthur, almost joyfully. He thought it a great point gained.

"I will," she answered, without hesitation.

Arthur tore a leaf from his pocket-book.

Edith sat down at a little table, by the case-mented window, spread the paper before her, took the pencil from his hand, and prepared to write; but her hand trembled, and a mist swam before her eyes.

It was a singular picture.

The pale and trembling woman, in her bridal dress, the very image of misery in gay attire, sitting in that little sanded room, with her head drooping over a scrap of paper, on which she was about to inscribe burning words of guilt and shame of him, and to him, who but a few hours ago had held that hand before the altar, to give and receive a mutual pledge of love and honour, until death should them part. And by her side, standing erect and resolute, with his pale lips compressed, and fire in his eye, the once gentle being who had so fondly loved her,

for the moment, stern and determined, his love laid aside like an unseasonable garment, giving place to the mantle of vengeance, how soon to fade in its turn—how soon to be rent and torn by the agonies of memory.

There is haste, and the minutes are rapidly flying away.

Arthur speaks, and at the sound of his voice the mist before Edith's eyes dissipates. She writes.

This singular letter, written in pencil, on two leaves torn from a pocket-book, has been carefully preserved, and is attached to the manuscript. The hand that inscribed these awful accusations, evidently trembled, though it is not difficult to decipher, for the writing, though feminine, is bold. There is no superscription, nor date, nor signature. This is it :

“ When I consented to sacrifice myself to you, for my father's sake, I knew you not ; but my eyes have been opened suddenly and, as it were, providentially.

“ There is now a great gulf between us, which you may never even hope to pass.

“Duty, not inclination, as you are well aware, removed all scruples on my side, and I swore to be yours. But the oath was given to a different man—it could not have been to you. It appears that you are a cowardly assassin, a gambler, a thief, a suborner of murderers, a traducer of the innocent, a spoiler of the orphan, a defamer of the dead, a perjured priest, a priest who has disgraced his order. You see I know you now. What more shall I say? You are the Marquis de Charolles, the Abbé Latouche, are you not? The master of a man called Chaumelin, or Marinier, it matters not which. It is true, then, and you are betrayed. The rightful owner of Morley is alive, and well; and but for my sake would have promptly and bitterly avenged the injury done to his mother’s memory, and the base treachery against himself.

“You are tottering to your base, but you will not fall yet, if you leave me free from your odious presence and persecution.

“This is the sole condition; but it must be kept to the letter.

“You wedded me as the heiress of Morley.

I am not the heiress of Morley, though there is no doubt of my legitimacy. You wedded me for money, and to consummate your revenge, I am penniless, and your vengeance is as a potter's vessel.

"Listen! Morley will some day have another mistress; that fair young girl, whose death or dishonour you sought, through your accomplice. Providence willed it not, and his artful and diabolical plans recoiled upon himself. Ere long she will be here.

"The hand of God is against you; therefore repent, and turn from your evil ways. As long as my father lives, and you refrain from seeking me, no further steps will be taken; but of this, be assured, that if you move a single step in advance, the sword will fall.

"I leave it to your invention, prolific as it is in resources, to explain to my father, why I have left you. Take care of him, and be kind to him, for that is to your advantage.

"Farewell, for ever! The Avenger is close at hand; therefore beware!"

Just as she had completed this sentence, there

was the sound of several footsteps, and then came a hurried knock at the door.

"The carriage is at the lodge gates, Master Arthur," said the voice of old Ellam, outside, "and Miss Edith's maid is come. She says there is no time to be lost. A bell rang in Sir Walter's room just before we left, and the lawyer's horse was ordered."

"Are you ready, dear Edith?" said Arthur; "or does your heart fail you?"

Edith bowed her head in token of assent, and rose tottering from the table; Arthur opened the door, and called to Dinah Derrick.

Brief was their greeting; but Arthur had just time to thank her for her letter, and her fidelity to her young mistress. There was no time for more.

Wrapping the cloak round Edith, Arthur offered her his arm; but she shrank from it with a shudder, and passed into the open air without speaking.

The wind blew in furious gusts, driving the slanting rain full into her face, as she left the cottage, with hasty, though uncertain steps, but

she felt it not ; what cared she then for the warring elements ?

The mournful howling of the gale, the moaning of the branches of the grim old oaks, the pitiless pattering of the driving rain, sang a sad and solemn dirge for thee, Edith, as thus thou wentest forth from thy home for ever. God rest thee, Edith !

There is the carriage ; the horses are reeking in the pouring rain, and the postilions are shivering with the cold. Away ! while there is yet time. The door is open, the steps are let down, all is ready ; Edith holds out her hand to Arthur, as if mechanically. It was cold, and clammy, and corpse-like ; Arthur shuddered, as he imprinted a kiss on it. She could not speak ; her lips, as if frozen, refused to move, and she turned her head away, as if to hide her tears. But Arthur caught that look, so woe-begone, so despairing, so death-like. It haunted him to his dying day.

“ God bless you, Edith ! ” was all he could say. The door is shut, and she is lost to his sight. Then he spoke a few words to young

Ellam, and as he shook him by the hand, he slipped a purse into it. Ellam mounted the box, and the carriage drove rapidly off towards London.

Arthur watched it till the hill shut it out from his view; then, with a deep sigh, he turned away, and re-entering the park, returned to the keeper's lodge.

His work was not yet done.

CHAPTER VIII.

WHEN we have long sought an object and found it after a tedious and difficult pursuit, how often does it happen that we discover, when too late, that the prize for which we have so eagerly searched falls far short of its anticipated value ! What from afar seemed a sparkling diamond, becomes a bit of glass when we handle it !

Who can tell, perhaps not our hero himself, what he expected to find when he threw up his commission, and quitted the island of the west ?

But Edith had never loved him.

This was the blow that broke the spell. The phantom hope that had lured him from his

duty and his love, crumbled into ashes. Always unreal, it had mocked his imagination with ideal images, and perverted his right judgment, and now he knew it.

She had never loved him but as a brother.

But would he have acted otherwise? To some men it might have been possible, but not to Arthur Conway, the creature of impulse, blown about by every wayward gust of passion. And now his position was singular and afflict-ing. He had made two promises entirely con-travening and annulling all his previous resolu-tions and it may be hopes. Swept away by Edith's tears, the avalanche of vengeance which he had prepared and determined to let fall on the traitor's head existed no longer, or if some portion of it did still remain, it could not fall without the traitor brought it down upon him-self. And he *must* not tempt him to advance.

Forced by this to lurk unseen and unknown about the very place that was his own, and for which he had now sacrificed so much, instead of claiming it openly in the face of day and dis-possessing the unrighteous usurpers with a strong and vengeful hand; forced by this to

permit the stigma on his birth to remain unwiped away, when he could so easily prove his legitimacy, and by so doing rescue his mother's memory from dishonour and expose the miserable traitor of the dead. Yet must he remain inactive. True, he was at liberty to tell the villain that his plots and wicked deeds were all laid bare, but what would such a man care for the voice of conscience? what would he care that his guilt and crimes were discovered, if punishment and exposure were not to follow the discovery? The avenger might be close at hand, but what of that. The promise to Edith was as a shield of brass to him whilst her father was alive.

But there was another promise—Marguerite. What did this involve? Either he must break his word, or go to seek her again; she could not well come to him. Could he leave England now? Could he dare to offer himself and his fallen fortunes to the gentle and afflicted Marguerite? How should he explain to her his sudden flight, and his no less sudden return, if return he did, having effected nothing, without betraying that Edith still held the sway of love

over him? Would it not be an insult to such a being to confess it?

Poor Arthur! he had never been in such a difficulty; and, to increase it, his feelings were now tending more and more towards the point they should have never turned from. Now that there was no more hope of Edith, he saw, in his behaviour towards Marguerite, a want of consistency, of good faith, that wrung his very heart-strings. Did he love her? A few hours ago we might safely have said no; but, since Edith's confession, he had turned to her who truly loved him, with an eager heart; as the traveller in the desert, long deceived by the tantalizing mirage, rejoices doubly when he discovers a real and living fountain.

Such thoughts and feelings as we have attempted to describe passed confusedly, though rapidly, through Arthur's mind, as he retraced his steps to the keeper's lodge.

We cannot give the whole conversation that ensued between the old keeper and our hero; but Ellam's replies to Arthur's questions were to the following effect. They had never attempted to get rid of him, though all the other servants,

except Miss Edith's maid, had been either sent away, or had left of their own accord. Partly, he supposed, because the cottage had been given to him by Sir William Deverell, for his and his son's life ; partly, he thought, because Sir Walter and the Marquis were somewhat afraid of him, as he believed he had more knowledge of the Deverell will, and the marriage of Mr. and Mrs. Conway, than he chose to reveal ; but in that they were mistaken. He only knew that Sir William Deverell had never made any other will besides the one found in his fishing-case ; and that he had never for a moment doubted our hero's legitimacy.

As to Miss Edith's marriage, he was very much surprised to learn that Arthur had never heard of its being contemplated, before he got Dinah Derrick's letter, as it was originally intended to have been celebrated on the 1st of September ; but Sir Walter having been seized with a violent and dangerous attack of paralysis just before that date, it had been postponed, in consequence, till November.

He had had very little communication with the new servants at the Hall, who were all the

creatures of the Marquis, and who were a bad, drunken set, and did very much as they pleased, as neither Sir Walter nor Miss Edith would look after them.

The Marquis had entire command over everything, but he did not like field sports, and never rode, scarcely indeed ever leaving the house ; so that the kennel and stables had gone to ruin, and the poachers had got so much the upper hand, as he had no assistants, that there was very little game or fish left in the preserves. Altogether, times were very bad, now that the Baronet could not take the field. No company ever came to the Hall, and the only time he ever saw any of the family was at church, when Miss Edith, and latterly the foreign gentleman, used to be present at the Sunday service.

The wedding, he said, was kept very secret. Except in the village, no one knew of it, until just before it took place. He could not abide it ; and when Miss Edith's maid told him it was to be, he had advised her to send, and get the young master home, to prevent it. Somehow, letters must have been stopped from going out to the West Indies ; for she had told him that

Miss Edith had already during the spring and had come in return.

"And now," said
"I be right glad you
Arthur, to claim your o

"But I am not go
Ellam," replied our her
is to say."

"And what be you
self, my dear young ma

"Heaven only know
all you can do me a
matter of some risk,
scrape—that Frenchma
ceitful."

"And sure, Master
gamekeeper, sturdily,
deal with awkward cus
their ways, that is, poac
this foreign Markis the
old, Master Arthur, but
do a bit of work for you

"I want you to tak
into his hands yourself

you are there, watch him well ; if he reads it, mark the expression of his eyes ; and if he says anything, try and remember his words."

" And if he asks me any questions about it?"

" Tell him it is from Miss Edith, that is all—not a word about myself."

" I can be as mute as a dying fox, Master Arthur, and he won't get much out of me ; but I won't tell no lies."

" Nay, Ellam, it is the truth—it is indeed from my cousin."

" That's enough, Master Arthur. I'm your man. Shall I go at once?"

" No, it is scarcely time yet, and I must settle what we are to do."

Arthur mused a few minutes, and then said :

" I shall return at once to Plymouth, and stay at the ' Crown Inn ' till I hear from your son, that my cousin Edith is safe and well. I told him to write to me at the Post-office there, and you can do the same, taking care that your letters are not stopped ; and let me know what the Marquis said and did when he received my letter, and what is going on."

The old keeper scratched his head in perplexity, and said :

" Beg pardon, Master Arthur, but I thought I told you that that part of my eddication had been forgotten. I can make my mark or even scratch my name in a rough sort of a way, but I can't write, more's the pity."

" Then I must come over to Morley village and see you occasionally."

" That'll scarcely do neither I'm thinking, Master Arthur : there be more than one know that you be come back, and you might be way-laid if they found you out. He'd not stick at trifles, depend upon it, to get you out of the way just now ; if I bean't much mistaken there's something about a will going on, and that's why Lawyer Clark was up at the Hall to-day so long."

" True," said Arthur, musingly, " I had forgotten that. He might murder me—it is quite in his way. Did not you say something about a will, Ellam ?"

" Yes, Master Arthur ; the Markis, the lawyer, and Sir Walter were closeted together, and two of the servants were sent for, Miss Derrick

said, to the library, no doubt as witnesses. It's but a guess, Master Arthur."

"A shrewd one, I have no doubt; and the sooner the villain gets the letter from my cousin the better. Now, good-by, Ellam, I shall come over in a day or two from Plymouth. Be on the bridge over the trout-stream at the dark pool about noon on each day if you can. I can hide myself there where none can find me. Your fishing lessons have taught me all the secret places in the rocks, and some day I hope, my trusty old friend, that we shall resume them. Go up to the Hall in half an hour, that will give me start enough, and I shall be at Plymouth before he has recovered from the shock."

* * * * *

Rapidly must the scenes change at this period of our history. We are now in the old town of Plymouth.

Day succeeded day, and yet no letter, no message reached our hero from either of the Ellams. Twice he had gone over to Morley to try and see the old keeper, but both times without success. He had watched the bridge for hours, but in vain; and then he had ventured to cross

the park to the keeper's lodge, but there was no sign of its owner ; and on both occasions he returned by the foot-bridge before mentioned. Still no Ellam. This was startling !

One day, he casually encountered the Captain of the 'Emerald,' and from him he learnt that she was refitting as rapidly as possible, to go out again to the West Indies, with the convoy under Admiral Christian, which was then getting ready for sea at Portsmouth, to see the large West Indian fleet of merchantmen safe to their destination. In the course of their conversation, he said it was likely that he should cruise off Martinique and Guadaloupe, making Dominica his head-quarters when out there. This naturally made our hero think of his promise to his cousin Edith, and he hinted as to the possibility of his soon going himself again to the West Indian Islands. The Captain, who was part owner of the privateer, offered him immediately a free passage, and Arthur, grateful for such liberality, as his means were now limited, thanked him cordially, and said that he would let him know finally in a few days, whether his business in England would permit him to sail in the 'Emerald.'

On the seventh day from his landing in England, Arthur was surprised and perplexed to see Young Ellam in his bed-room, as he was dressing for breakfast.

There was a look of anxiety and grief in the swarthy countenance of the young keeper that bespoke evil tidings.

"What has brought you back so soon, Ellam?" said Arthur, sharply. "I thought you were in London."

"We never got there at all, Master Arthur," replied the keeper, gravely.

"What do you mean, Ellam?" cried our hero, hoarsely.

"I am sorry to bring you bad news, my dear young master, but Miss Edith is—"

"Dead!" screamed Arthur. "I saw it—I felt it—I knew it when you came in. Oh! my God, what shall I do—how shall I act now? I shall go mad! It is I that have killed her! God have mercy upon me! Yet I might have foreseen this—poor Edith! She was terribly ill at the cottage, and I, selfish brute that I am, let her go on the journey that has killed her. It is I, Ellam, I who am her murderer! There

was but this wanting to crown the heap I had piled up. Ellam, am I not a villain?"

The young keeper tried all his powers of persuasion to calm his young master. He had greater command over Arthur's wayward fancies, and bitter self-reproaches, than even he himself was aware of. Arthur listened to his words of consolation and encouragement, and after a time they had their effect. The gusts of anguish and self-condemnation subsided into the steady gale of real and bitter grief. Yet for hours he dared not trust himself to question Ellam, or to hear his story.

When he did tell it, it created so strong a revulsion of feeling, that energy once more took the place of miserable prostration.

"We got as far as Hungerford, Master Arthur," resumed the keeper, "but there Miss Edith was taken so ill, that we were obliged to stop. Miss Louisa was immediately sent for, and a doctor from London. I was not present, as you may suppose, when they saw the young lady, but next morning Miss Edith was a little better, and I was sent for to go up to her. She was lying on a sofa, dressed, but looking deadly

pale. There was no one in the room but ourselves. It was very awful like. She could hardly speak, poor young lady! but she motioned me to come near her. Her words were in a whisper, but yet a little wild, as if her mind was wandering a bit, but I remember every word of them, Master Arthur.

“ ‘ You have been my cousin Arthur Conway’s faithful friend: be so still to him, for he will need one. Tell him that I shall not rest in my grave if he forgets his promise. I beseech him on my death-bed to make this atonement for his erring and wretched cousin, and, as a token that she is forgiven, let him call his first-born daughter Edith. Let him not, as you are a true friend, waste the precious hours of his youth in vain regrets and useless sorrowing. Let him hasten to seek *her*, and may he find her worthy of his love. So will the memory of his cousin Edith not be accursed.’

“Don’t be shocked, dear Master Arthur; but no sooner had she said this, than I saw a sudden deep flush spread over her pale face, and the blood came gushing forth from her mouth and nostrils. I ran to the door, and

cried for help; but before Miss Louisa could reach the sofa, a strong convulsion passed over her, and she was dead."

Arthur did not attempt to speak; but indicated to Ellam to go on with his story, which he did, thus:

"Seeing I could be of no further use, and believing that you would not be safe within reach of the Hall, I got on the coach, and came on as far as Morley; where I got down to look in at the lodge. Father was not there, and there were no signs of him; no fire in the kitchen, and the rooms all untidy. I thought, may be he had joined you, Master Arthur; but I find he has not. Still, as I knew the ways of the place, I thought I might as well take a look round, keeping out of sight of the windows. Well, I saw nothing till I came to what we call the hanging-bridge, that crosses the trout stream, where it rushes, with a fall, between the high cliffs, into the black pool, where the big fish lie. Two men were standing on it; one was the foreign Markis, the other, a man I knew well formerly as a poaching vagabond—one Gaffeny, half Irish,

half gipsy, and whole scamp. I got near them easy enough; but the water, swelled by the rain, made such a confounded noise, that I could not hear what they were talking about; but I saw the Markis point to the deep hole below, and act a bit, as if pushing something over into it, from the bridge. Well, Master Arthur, I thought to myself, they can't be here for nothing; so I hid behind one of the big lumps of moss-covered rock, that shuts in the narrow path to the bridge.

"Presently they turned, and came back over the bridge, towards me; one following the other, for there is not room for two abreast.

"They stopped close by where I was hid, I could have almost touched them; you may think, Master Arthur, how I listened. The first words I heard came from your enemy.

" 'You are sure he comes this way?'

" 'Yes,' replied the poacher, 'I seed him twice this week.'

" 'And pray what were you doing in the park?'

"The man stammered something, and looked flabbergasted.

" 'Well, never mind,' said the Markis ;

'only, remember, I am with,' and I saw his e snake's; 'a hundred po

"I couldn't hear any on, and soon separated towards the Hall, and wards turning back, as Just as he came to wh out, and met him face t

"'Hillo, Bill Gaffeny errand are you after ne when he saw me, to l Arthur, a little chaffing and at last I said to hi know, Bill Gaffeny, wh duck in the river?' I stared, and looked like few minutes, to recover how it was you, Master knowing the chap well, it, and I was right. that if he had even su thing, no, not thousands tempted him to agree head. Then I asked

father was. But he said he didn't: and I believe he didn't, for he was so scared, that he could hardly help telling the truth. After I had hinted that it might not be long before you came to your own again, I found he was easily led on, so I drew him out gradually, and he confessed, under a promise of secrecy to all but you, that the foreigner had offered him a hundred pounds if he would manage to throw you over into the gully-hole: that is, not you exactly, Master Arthur, but a young man dressed as a sailor, who had latterly been in the habit of coming across the bridge. The Marquis said he was a spy upon him, and would do him an injury, and it would be an easy matter to get rid of him in this way. Bill Gaffeny was tempted by the hundred pounds, for he was terribly out at elbows, and agreed to do the job, though he didn't like it much. And now he said he was mighty glad that I had popped in the way, to prevent his doing it, for he was sure your ghost would have never let him rest, day or night. They like you, Master Arthur, in these parts; and I don't think there is one would lift a hand against you, barring a stranger.

When he let this out, made use of; so to make him it was not likely you way again, till you would say nothing about provided he would give send or bring us timely of the Frenchman's swore that he would, mouth."

"I am very uneasy Arthur, when Ellam has

"I'm not afeerd for Master Arthur," replied a cute old fox; and I'm not at home. He is a of them, with her in his nothing of him. If he for some good reason of it, Master Arthur."

"Would that I could hero, in his usual despo seems for ever my fate, one who is friendly to fortune."

"Young Master is in one of his low fits again," thought Ellam, who was in reality as much puzzled and anxious about his father's mysterious absence as our hero: "this won't do."

* * * * *

Another week has slipped stealthily by. No news from old Ellam, no news from Bill Gaffeny, and the 'Emerald' is ready for sea. In three days she is to sail. Arthur has made up his mind to go out in her, and seek once more, in a tropical land, the lovely flower that now he longed to gather. He has heard from his cousin Louisa. She has forgiven everything, and is coming to the Hall to cherish her father's declining days. Edith rests in her grave. He remembers the promises made to her when alive: shall he break them now that she is in the tomb? Let her father enjoy, if he can, his ill-gotten wealth. It is but for a season. Let the wicked Marquis prosper in his evil ways. He is but heaping coals of fire on his own head. The time will come. It is now a good spirit that leads Arthur to do what is right, the evil one is buried deep in Edith's grave. Duty and love, his promise and his

inclination, now go huddled to sleep, and if, fortunes seem sunk full making. Hope is standing imagination every success brings him nearer to the

Well has the faithful request of the dying master positively refused to master. He has vowed him out as his servant foremast-man on board will, although he has Nothing shall prevent his entreaties and command

* * *

Once more upon the But now our hero is pacing, with curious eyes, crew.

These were stirring for those who trusted the ocean.

The red cross and the to each other on those

mighty fleets of line-of-battle-ships and single frigates, knights-errant, of the deep, met, and the thunder of their guns spoke out before high heaven the enmity of the nations. Stern and fierce was the contest, for he who was destined to cast the weight of his matchless powers into the balance, was yet but scarcely known to fame.

But there is a power mightier than either. Often has it been the safeguard of these heaven-protected shores, even when it bore death and devastation on its wings. At once the preserver and the destroyer, our friend and our foe—the Tempest!

It was a lovely day, and every eye in the ‘Emerald’ was turned towards the east.

In truth, it was a grand and heart-stirring spectacle. The glorious cliffs of old England loomed grand in the morning haze, while the sea, as far as the eye could reach, was studded with ships of every class, in every variety of position, with their white sails gleaming in the sun. There a stately frigate, with but little canvas spread to the light south-easterly breeze, glided slowly and majestically along; here a

deep-laden merchantman, with every sail set, yet lagging astern; there a dashing, raking schooner, laying-to; here a lumbering transport, rolling fearfully, even in the gentle swell of the now peaceful Atlantic; while far away to the east might be seen the lofty spars of a noble seventy-four, with an admiral's flag waving at her mast-head—the proud controller of the fleet.

Slowly and gracefully the 'Emerald' threaded her way through the crowd of vessels to speak the Admiral, and put herself under his orders. Ere she could effect her object, the scene was changed.

Suddenly, when off the Isle of Portland, the wind veered to the south, and dark, ominous masses of cloud arose on the horizon towards the west. Signals were made from the men-of-war to the fleet to stand out to sea and gain an offing, so as to clear the dreaded mass of rock running out so fearfully into the sea. Alas, too late! Again the wind veered, coming in sudden and fitful gusts from the south-west, with violent showers of driving rain, and the sea got up as if by magic.

Then arose a scene of confusion and distress perhaps unparalleled. The merchant-vessels and transports, short-manned and badly officered, had not time to hand their light sails before the squall struck them. Sails were torn away from the yards, or blown from the bolt-ropes. Masts and spars snapped like rotten reeds, and came thundering down, wounding and killing many unfortunates in their fall, or sweeping them away into the raging waters.

Before long, it blew a furious gale, dead on shore. We will not attempt to depict the fearful horrors that ensued. A storm, an iron-bound coast, a lee-shore, a raging sea, a confused multitude of half-manned merchant-ships and lumbering, crowded transports, tell their own tale.

But the storm off Weymouth, and along that fearful coast, on the 18th November, 1795, was long remembered for its sudden and fatal severity. Where is the 'Emerald?' She is weathering it bravely, though staggering fearfully under the canvas she is obliged to carry to keep her off the land. The sea is gushing clear and bright through her lee-scuppers, and the fierce waves

are washing her fore and aft as they break over her. Still she holds her own.

But see, a huge dark mass comes bearing down on her, in sad distress, yawning fearfully. In vain are shouts and cries; in vain is all the skill of the Captain and the energy of the crew: a collision is inevitable. There is an awful crash. One sinks in a few minutes into the yawning gulf. The 'Emerald' is cut down to the water's edge, her foremast and bowsprit carried clean away, her boats stove in; and in a few hours she must go down.

There is but one chance of saving any of their lives. Well does the Captain know the coast. One spot only affords a prospect of life. It is a little cove amidst grim cavernous rocks. The entrance is fearfully narrow: if they miss it, not a soul will be saved, but if he can beach her there, there is hope.

With great difficulty and danger she is at last got before the wind, and on she drives before its fury, to annihilation or safety.

* * * * *

What a crash as her sharp keel strikes the sand! Away goes the mainmast, close by the

board over her side, as she heels to the force of the first thundering breaker that comes combing and towering through the rocky gap, and lifts her farther towards the shore, grinding her against the beach as if it would tear her in pieces ; but her frame is strong and solid, and she resists it. As it spends itself, the sailors clamber over her bows, and along the wreck of the mainmast: some reach the shore, others are washed away by the relentless surf: Arthur has been struck down and stunned: another huge foam-crested wave strikes her and sweeps her further up the beach. Threatening death, it has proved the salvation of those who had clung to the vessel, for the next wave scarcely breaks over her, and the tide is beginning to ebb.

Ellam has never lost his presence of mind. When the 'Emerald' struck, and the mainmast went over her side, he saw his young master thrown down by some of the falling rigging, and he perceived, at once, that without a strong and immediate effort was made to save him, he must be washed overboard. Twining a rope, which providentially was strongly secured to a

cleet on the weather-side, round one arm, he let himself slide down to where Arthur was lying helpless against the lee bulwark, and passing the disengaged arm round his waist, he contrived to lift him, and by a strong effort, with the assistance of the rope, he recovered his position under the low but strong timbers of the weather-side, and lashing the rope two or three times round both their bodies, he succeeded in maintaining his place of security until the wreck was lifted and forced by the violent heaving of the surf, so far up the beach, that as soon as the tide began to ebb, the waves scarcely reached them. Then, with the assistance of the people on the beach, our hero was safely carried in Ellam's arms to the shore, though he still continued senseless.

There is a small village or hamlet near this singular cove, and there he was conveyed, and a surgeon sent for.

Some days elapsed before our hero was restored to consciousness. He had suffered a slight concussion of the brain, but no bones were broken, and his bruises were not of a serious nature.

CHAPTER IX.

It was a clear starlight night when Arthur drove up to the door of the 'Crown Inn.' He felt very stiff and confused after his long drive, and when he alighted from the chaise, instead of entering the inn, he told Ellam to secure him a bed and order supper ; and without any definite object, strolled up the street.

Just as he turned the corner, where hung a dim lamp, he ran suddenly against a man smoking a cigar.

Arthur begged the man's pardon, and was passing on, when his hand was suddenly grasped and wrung heartily, and the stranger exclaimed, in a strong, clear voice :

" *C'est bien toi, mon ami.* Aha ! our star is in the ascendant ! *vive la fortune !*"

It was François Devrien.

In truth, the meeting was strange and unlooked for, particularly on Arthur's side. He could hardly believe it was real. Had he not felt the warm, cordial clasp of the young Frenchman's hand, he might have thought he had seen his wraith, not the living, breathing form of his mother's son. There was something, at first sight, so unaccountable in thus encountering each other in a sea-port town in England, that it had the appearance of a scene in some Arabian Night's tale, not of a simple, sober reality. But when Arthur found that his brother was actually staying at the same inn, and that Rosalie, too, was there, his wonder increased, and he grew very impatient to learn what had brought François and his charming wife so suddenly and unexpectedly to England. Arm-in-arm they returned to the 'Crown.' Supper was soon served in a warm and comfortable room, and they sat down to it *tête-à-tête*, for Rosalie did not appear ; she was tired, and had gone to bed.

Ellam did not, as usual, wait at table on his young master. He had gone out, the waiter said, almost immediately after his arrival. He had bespoken rooms, and ordered supper, and then, without leaving any message, he had left, and had not returned; but Arthur was too much occupied with the new arrival to think twice about the faithful Ellam.

The cloth was cleared away. The wax candles burnt steadily, the fire blazed cheerily, the red wine sparkled and dimpled in the glowing light as they drew their chairs to the fire, when the waiter had left the room.

A feeling of snugness and comfort crept over the two young men, and Arthur felt more cheerful and contented than he had done for some time past.

"You are, no doubt, surprised to see me in England, *mon cher*, are you not?" said François, when the door was shut.

"Certainly, François, I cannot even imagine why you have come."

"My reasons were cogent ones."

"I have a strong suspicion that they relate to myself."

"You are not far wrong, Arthur, and I have a strange tale to tell you, but it is too late to-night. Though this claret is tolerable and the food not bad for an English *cuisinier*, and your company the most agreeable to me in the world, I must postpone it till to-morrow: then you shall learn all. But, instead, tell me what you have been doing with yourself and give me the *carte du pays*."

"My story is soon told," replied Arthur, with a sigh, "I have, as usual, failed. I was too late to save my poor cousin, Edith, and she is dead."

A great difficulty solved, thought François.

"And I promised her to spare my enemies. The weapons are taken out of my hands, and I am powerless."

"So said Marinier," muttered François.

"Coupled with this promise was another, that I should return to the West Indies and seek to regain what I had lost through her. It was her dying request; but the winds and waves drove me back again, and I was murmuring and repining against the will of God, and lo! you are here."

“ How happy it would make dear little Marguerite, if she could hear that you were again going out to seek her.”

“ Have I not behaved to her like a villain ? Tell me how is she ? how did she bear my base desertion of her ?”

“ When I last saw her she was well and happy. Ever trusting in your love and truth, my dear Arthur, she did not make herself miserable about your absence, and she has proved herself right. Is it not so ?”

“ I am not worthy of her, François. Such purity, such confiding, innocent love is too good for such a wretched vacillating being as I am. But I will confess everything to her, and then if she does not reject me—”

“ She will only pity you, Arthur, and love you more and more.”

“ I do not think I should have the courage to do so even now, had I not promised. I will not deceive her ; she shall know all my folly, all my weakness.”

“ Nonsense, Arthur, you know very little of such women as Marguerite, if you suppose that will make any difference. In the first place she

will not believe you. In her eyes you are the most perfect of human beings, and nothing short of your actually marrying another woman would make her doubt your faith. Jealousy does not exist in her young heart, and the very fact of your having started to go out again is sufficient to confirm her views of your fidelity. But I am glad that you did not succeed in your design just at present: I should have been sorry indeed to have missed you. How did it happen?"

Arthur related how he had been wrecked in the 'Emerald,' and that suspicions of foul play had brought him back to Plymouth. Ellam's name was of course mentioned, and it gave rise to some peculiar thoughts in the mind of the young Frenchman which will be explained hereafter.

We need not give their conversation further, as François resolutely declined telling any part of his story till the following morning, much to Arthur's surprise, for he could imagine no reason for such silence, and he could not help expressing it; but François turned it off gaily and laughingly, and offered no explanation.

When they retired for the night, Arthur asked for Ellam; but he had not returned to the inn, and the waiter knew nothing about him.

Arthur thought this strange; but stranger things were to happen.

Our hero passed a restless night, and did not rise till late. When he was nearly dressed, there was a slight knock at his bedroom door.

"Come in," he said, thinking it was Ellam; but no one entered, and the knock was repeated.

"Who's there?" cried Arthur, impatiently.

"*C'est moi*," replied a small, female voice.

"Who are you, and what do you want?" was the ungallant reply, for our hero was not in his usual good temper. Ellam's absence had perplexed and annoyed him.

"*C'est moi, la petite Fanfan*," replied the voice; "*ne me connaissez pas, Monsieur le Capitaine?* You no recollect leetle Fanfan, *chez La Belle Etoile*, ven les nègres cruels put him all in de fire? Eh, Massa Conway, you no recollect buckra sodgers?"

"Stop, stop, for mercy's sake," replied Arthur from the inside, alarmed at Fanfan's voluble

tongue ; " I remember you very well, *ma jolie petite*, but tell me what you want."

" *On vous attend à déjeuner, Monsieur Arthur* ; Missie Rosalie say tea poil ; pose you no *venez pas vite*, Missie tell leetle Fanfan *aller vous chercher*. See, *je vous trouve*, must come. Missie Rosalie *bien fâchée*, pose you don't."

Arthur could not refuse this invitation, though, for some reason—not a good one, certainly—he would rather have declined it.

The waiter opened the door, and announced him. Rosalie rose when he entered, and, with a smile and a blush, offered him her cheek to kiss, addressing him as her "dear brother." There was no longer any coquetry in her manner.

Arthur had not seen her since the fatal morning when the Carib had summoned him from La Belle Etoile, yet it seemed but yesterday that they had parted, now that she was again before him.

How lovely she looked ! There was a fresh glow of health on her peach-like cheeks, which he had never seen in that enervating climate ; her eyes sparkled with pleasure, pure and sincere ;

they had lost their voluptuous languor. Her dark hair, drawn back, and simply parted on her forehead, hung in large waving masses over her falling shoulders. No golden comb, with its crest of jewels, decked that queen-like head. Lovely she was always, but oh! how much more so in her simplicity!

Her greeting was affectionate, and warm with sisterly love, and Arthur's heart beat with a new feeling. He had never had a sister, now he had found one.

They sat down to breakfast.

There were three cups and saucers, three plates—in fact, everything arranged for a third person.

Arthur naturally thought it was for François, but that idea was promptly dispelled by Rosalie saying :

“François is gone out on particular business, and the naughty boy would not even tell me, his wife, what it is; but he will not be back till the afternoon: so we shall have plenty of time to have a long *cause* together after breakfast.”

Arthur did not like to ask her for whom the

third plate was laid. Had he a secret presentiment of what was to come?

Presently the door opened, and there was the rustling of a lady's dress.

A slight figure, dressed in deep mourning, entered. Arthur, who was sitting with his back to the door, rose instinctively at the sound.

He turned round.

His brain reeled. The room spun round, and he caught hold of a chair, or he would have fallen. Then a cry burst from the very depths of his heart.

"Marguerite!"

"Arthur!"

In a moment, Rosalie's presence was forgotten—the impulse was irresistible. Arthur strained the blushing, trembling little Marguerite to his heart.

In that moment, months of suffering were obliterated. In that kiss there was a promise of peace and happiness for the future.

Marguerite burst into tears, but they were tears of joy.

Rosalie looked on with a beaming smile; they were happy, and it made her so, for it

wanted but this to crown the summit of her felicity.

She had watched for it, she had striven for it, she had prayed for it ; and now it seemed that Providence had decreed the fulfilment of her prayers and wishes, by thus throwing these two together, after so strange and terrible a separation—one in a few short hours to be in the power of ruthless savages ; the other, seeking for vengeance, to find a bullet.

“ Come, children,” said Rosalie, with a little laugh ; “ breakfast waits ; the tea will be quite spoilt if you look any longer into one another’s eyes. Sit down, dear ones.”

The lovers blushed, and, perhaps, looked a little confused ; but they did as Rosalie desired.

The manuscript does not say what they ate and what they drank, but I should think very little, for love, joy, and sorrow injure the appetite for the moment, though it soon recovers in a general way.

No doubt it was a very—very pleasant breakfast, and it would have been perfect had François been present to partake of it.

After it was over, Rosalie left the two young

lovers together, wisely judging that they might have much to say to one another. What they did say, the reader would not care to hear. Hours passed, but Arthur had never mentioned the name of Edith. Her shadow fell no longer on his love for the winning Marguerite. She asked for no explanations—sufficient to her was the presence of her beloved. He whispered words of love and affection in her ear, and they fell on her young heart like manna in the wilderness. She fed on them, and was satisfied.

The afternoon had advanced ere Rosalie came back. They had finished luncheon, but the cloth was not removed when François entered the room. His face was flushed, and he appeared very much excited. They all rose, and grouped themselves round him when he came in, for it was evident that he brought some news. He looked from one face to the other with a strange, and yet meaning smile, which not one of them could understand, and, filling a glass of wine from the decanter, he raised it in the air, and, leaning towards Arthur, said, in a solemn voice :

“I drink to the health and long life of Sir

Arthur Conway, and the fair Marguerite !”
And

“ He quaffed off the liquor and threw down the cup,”

saying : “ no lips but mine shall ever touch that glass.”

“ Explain yourself !” cried Arthur, vehemently excited in his turn. “ What does this mean ?”

“ Simply that you are now Sir Arthur Conway, and Lord of Morley Hall.”

Exclamations of surprise and pleasure escaped the lips of the lovely creole. Marguerite watched Arthur’s countenance anxiously and timidly, as if fearing the effects of the sudden announcement on his sensitive mind. Indeed, he was so excited and bewildered by this unexpected intelligence, that he could scarcely speak.

“ Now,” said François, “ do not think me ungallant, ladies, if I request you to allow me to have a long *tête-à-tête* conversation with my dear brother Arthur : by-and-by you shall know all. Are you satisfied ?”

“ I suppose we must be so,” replied Rosalie.
“ What say you, dear Marguerite ? my lord and

master commands me, but you are as yet independent."

"Come, come, Rosalie, you know that you have your own way when you want it," said Francis, laughing.

"Don't believe him, Maggie dear, he is a very tyrant; even now he is bitterly impatient because we have not gone already. Shall we stay to tease him?"

"Oh, no," said Marguerite, glancing at Arthur, and blushing, "we shall only be in the way."

But Arthur did not say anything; he did not, as might have been expected, raise any objection to the banishment of the ladies.

"Come then, dear Maggie," said Rosalie, indignantly, "let us leave these ungallant gentlemen to themselves." And rising, she swept majestically out of the room, followed by her adopted sister. But no sooner was the door closed upon them than she threw her arms round Marguerite's neck and kissed her, saying tenderly: "May you be as happy, dearest, as you deserve to be. His enemies are overcome, and your trials are nearly over."

Let us now relate, as concisely as we can, the young Frenchman's story. It will be necessary to give it partly in his own words, partly in narrative, in order that the reader may fully understand it. And thus he commenced it :

" On the morning after you had sailed from Dominica I rose rather early. It was oppressively sultry, and the doors and windows had been left open during the night.

" On the table in my dressing-room I found two sealed letters ; one directed to myself, the other to Marguerite, and by their side a black leathern pocket-book. This had been apparently lately wetted, and then carefully dried. When I had dressed, I called the slaves one by one before me, and questioned them separately as to how these letters and book had come where they were. They stared in surprise, and one and all declared that they knew nothing about them."

" It was Le Baron," said Arthur. " I begged him to deliver the letter into your own hands."

" You solve the mystery easily enough ; and

so I did myself. He would not do that because I had offended him," replied François.

"But of the pocket-book, I know nothing," continued Arthur; "unless it was the one Marinier lost, and which the Carib may have picked up."

"You have hit the nail on the head at once, Arthur. It is his; and its contents may somewhat surprise you. Are you prepared to hear them? They startled me, I confess."

"Tell me first," said Arthur, seizing the young Frenchman's hand nervously, "have they anything to do with my future fate? I have been hours with Marguerite; but have not had the courage to tell her anything."

François grasped his hand warmly, and said:

"If what I have to tell you does not change the whole current of your thoughts, if it does not give you a new life; if it does not, in fact, make you what you deserve to be—honoured, rich, and happy, may I lose Rosalie's love. Little Marguerite shall be a titled lady of the land. *Dieu merci!* I have forgotten that I am a *sans culotte*, and you shall show Madame

Rosalie and myself, how you great people live in this foggy little island."

"So help me Heaven! and may God pardon me for it," replied Arthur, in a low voice; "before I met you yesterday, I was so utterly heart-broken, that I did not care what became of me. Death was in my thoughts."

"Bah!" said François, gaily, "listen to me; and depend upon it, that will be the last thing you will wish for. Have I roused your curiosity, or are you thinking of little Marguerite's blue eyes?"

Arthur motioned to François to go on.

"I gave her your note; and when she read it, I saw a tear drop gently on it, poor little Maggie! but I said nothing, either to her or Rosalie, about the pocket-book. Now for its contents. Here is the original, just as I got it."

François took out from a writing-case a shabby black leathern pocket-book, and laid it before him on the table.

Arthur was now all curiosity. He began to have an inkling of what was coming, for he remembered Marinier's intense anxiety about this book.

François drew a small folded paper out of one of the pockets, and handed it to Arthur, saying: "A dowry for Marguerite."

Arthur took it eagerly, unfolded it with trembling hands, and glanced rapidly over its contents: an unutterable expression of surprise and pleasure beamed in his eyes, and lighted his pale countenance, as he read it. Then a tear dropped softly on the paper, and he murmured in gentle accents: "At last; O, my mother! Great God! I thank Thee. How inscrutable are Thy ways; how wonderful Thy goodness! What have I done, that I should receive this mercy at Thy hands!"

Once the young Frenchman might have indulged in a slight sneer at Arthur's words, but now, he had neither the power nor the inclination to scoff at prayer and thanksgiving; for he believed: no, he rather joined in his brother's heartfelt gratitude for the goodness of Providence. He saw that he was much affected, and for some time was silent.

And what was this document, that had raised such grateful and pleasurable emotions in Arthur's heart?

It was the very paper the priest, with the glittering black eyes, had removed from the velvet purse, which he had found in the drawer of the ornamented crucifix, when he so fearfully recognised the dying lady by her beautiful golden hair. It was in trying to indicate the existence and hiding-place of this very paper, that the ill-starred Eugenie excited in the physician's mind the idea that she was praying to and adoring the crucifix.

This was the paper mentioned as missing in the letter from the Marquis de Charolles, which we have read; and, to recover this very paper, Marinier left the 'Emerald,' at Barbadoes, to return to Dominica.

It was a certificate of marriage between Arthur William Conway, bachelor, and Eugenie de la Motte, widow, dated at Hamburgh, on the 20th December, 1773, and signed by the British chaplain, with all proper formalities.

There could be no doubt that this was a genuine document; still there might be considerable difficulty in proving its authenticity. There was no longer any English church at Hamburgh. Twenty years and more had elapsed

since the chaplain had signed it; he might be dead; and of the four attesting witnesses, what might have been their fate in these terrible times?

After the first glow of surprise and pleasure had passed away, a sudden chill fell on Arthur's heart, as these difficulties presented themselves one by one, to his apprehensive nature. His morbid imagination immediately conjured up before him a host of improbable contingencies, all more or less bearing on the impossibility of his ever proving his legitimacy; and he was giving vent to his feelings in a desponding tone, when François stopped him, saying: "Do not let us discuss the way and means, dear Arthur, just now; but let me rather proceed with my story."

"I will not interrupt you again," replied our hero; "but it seems so strange that you should have brought me this treasure."

"You will think it stranger when I have told you all; but, *révenons!* where did I leave off? Well, I said nothing to the women about the pocket-book that day; but when I was at leisure and alone, although I knew it was not mine, I

took the liberty to examine into its contents. The first paper I opened contained the very information I was most anxious to procure. It was a key that unlocked a deep and fearful mystery. It told me that the Marquis de Charolles was alive, and still scheming and plotting. It revealed, too, the place of his habitation. All that Marinier had withheld from me, in his confession, was made known, except my father's name; and it confirmed what Dallas and I had agreed upon—namely, that your enemy and mine were one and the same individual.

“The murderer of my father was breathing freely the air of life, and prospering in his circumstances, at the expense of you, my new-found brother.

“I read letter after letter. Some were copies of the replies sent; others, notes and extracts from different, but regular sets of correspondences, some of an old date; and among them I discovered the one, from which the scrap found at the Middle Ground had been accidentally torn.

“What a fearful conspiracy against you these letters revealed, dimly, it is true, to me, for I

had not the clue to them ; but still sufficiently plain, even to my dull apprehension, to prove to me that ruin, danger, if not death, threatened you at every step. And you were gone with the very man to whom was intrusted the execution of these vile designs, as a companion. No doubt he would induce you to accompany him to England, and then what would be your fate?

“ I pondered deeply, as you may imagine, on the contents and purport of these extraordinary documents, and came to the conclusion that this man, Marinier, had sought an interview with you, not for the purpose of revealing to you all the cursed treachery of the Marquis, but in order to try some new plot against your happiness or your life.

“ I made a further search, and found your parents’ marriage certificate. Then a new light burst upon me. This was the secret he had to impart to you. This was what he told Marguerite you would give worlds to know.

“ To make a long story short, I will not tell you all that passed in my mind ; but I was in a strange perplexity. Had I not been encumbered with a wife, I should not for a moment have

hesitated. I should have immediately applied for permission to follow you as a prisoner on parole to England, if necessary. But what was to be done with the two women, unprotected, in such unsettled times? two, I say, for Marguerite had already agreed to live with us. Rosalie at length perceived that I had something on my mind. Women are quick-witted and curious; and I could not conceal my anxiety from her. Knowing that she would not rest, I told her at once the whole story.

"She did not hesitate. 'Let us all go to England,' she said. 'Let us sell part, if not all, of our property here. Arthur Conway is your brother, I am your wife, we are both British subjects, and you, perforce, must become one too, for you can never again join the Republicans. Dear old England is the place for us, for we are not poor; and Marguerite will be rejoiced to see it again. Let us leave this too fatal island, if she will consent; but without her I will not go. Write to your friend, Doctor Dallas, and see what he says; and I will consult Marguerite.'

"Rosalie's advice was good, but I could not

make up my mind so suddenly. It looked like deserting my colours, besides, I had property at Guadaloupe, and I could not well sacrifice that. By the by, I managed to dispose of it easily enough after all, and have got bills for it on a house at Marseilles.

"In this uncertainty, I let several days slip by, but at last I made up my mind and wrote a note to Dallas, requesting him to ride over to the Carse of Gowrie, as I had a very important communication to make to him concerning you. When his answer came, I found that he was too busy to quit the Morne. The vomito was raging amongst the men, and the hospital was full, but he said if I would come over to Roseau, I was in no kind of danger, and he would be very happy to see me. Enclosed was a very pressing invitation from Doctor Gray to all three of us to stay in his house as long as we liked. There was a solemn council held between those concerned, but as the ladies had made up their minds, and were two to one, I had very little chance, even if I had wished to oppose their determination, which was to go to England, home as they called it (though I know

not what right Rosalie had to consider it as such), if it was thought expedient by the good surgeon, and I had very little doubt in my mind what his advice would be. So I yielded with a good grace and wrote again to Dallas, and we forthwith commenced preparations for a departure to Roseau in the first instance.

“ Whilst we were making these arrangements, I was surprised one day by the appearance of a soldier with an official despatch for me, and a note from our firm friend Dallas. I must confess that I was rather startled and alarmed at this unexpected event; but the contents of the official letter changed my alarm into astonishment. I have kept it, here it is :

“ ‘ Sir,

“ ‘ A Frenchman named Marinier, or Chaumelin, has been arrested as a conspirator and spy. The charges have been fully proved against him before a court-martial, and he has been condemned to be hanged. He has made a pressing request to have an interview with you before his death, and a respite has been

accorded to him until your answer is received,

(Signed)

“ ‘ &c., &c., &c.’ ”

“ The note from Dallas was brief and simple.

“ ‘ Come at once. The ruffian says he has much to tell you about Conway. It was with some difficulty that I obtained the favour of a respite. You are now looked upon as a British subject, consequently there is no danger to your person. Best regards to Madame, and La Belle Ecossaise.

“ ‘ N.B.—There is a fine brig^g loading for the West of England in the roadstead—she will be ready to sail in a few weeks.’ ”

“ I will now suppose that we are all under the hospitable roof of Dr. Gray. It was evening when I went up to Morne Bruce and called upon Dallas. I found that the wretched Mari-
nier was to be hanged early the next morning, whether I came or not, and that half an hour only was granted for an interview. Now I

learnt for the first time that you were actually on your way to England, having thrown up your commission at Barbadoes. This intelligence came from your faithful friend, Ellam, who said that you were too ill to write yourself.

“I was now rejoiced, that our determination had been taken, for, no doubt, you had been induced to take this wild, and apparently, extraordinary step, under the influence of some villanous treachery; my only fear was, that I might be too late.

“The sergeant of the guard came to Dallas’s quarters, and informed me that the prisoner was ready to see me. As I approached the building, where he was confined, with the sergeant carrying the key to admit me, the sentry saluted as if I was one of his own officers. I looked hard at him, and found it was my old valet, Tom Connolly. He grinned, but did not speak, such being the etiquette. I found the poor wretch, Marinier, in a deplorable plight, and, at first, I felt a degree of pity for him. He was haggard, pale, and dejected; and no wonder, for he was chained and handcuffed, in a dark and mouldy dungeon, with a sentry

keeping guard on him, and in a few hours he was to die. He scarcely stirred when I entered. The sergeant locked the door on us, saying that he would come for me in half an hour, and we were left alone. I sat down on an old box, half eaten by the ants, that rested in a corner of the filthy dungeon.

“ ‘Ha, Marinier !’ I said, ‘I am sorry to see you in such a condition. What can I do to serve you ?’

“ ‘Spare your fine speeches, Monsieur Le Blanc,’ he replied, in a sneering bitter tone. ‘Hypocrisy is ever shallow. There is very little love between us, though we were once fellow-conspirators.’

“ I winced a little at this ; for I had not quite got over the idea of being arrested as a spy.

“ Marinier saw it, and a slight smile curled his lip, as he said : ‘I am condemned to die ; and you know it ! No power on earth can save me ; but I have lost the desire to drag you down with me, even if I could. I wanted you for another purpose, and they granted me an interview, as a favour—the canting miscreants ! a favour to a man with a rope round his neck.’

Then he suddenly changed his tone, and said, savagely: 'Time presses. Curses on that wily De Charolles; I have lost everything for him—pleasure! liberty! nay, life itself! whilst doing his bidding. Think you I served him from liking or gratitude, Monsieur Le Blanc, though he did once save me from the *conciergerie*. No! I got my living by him, such as it was; and now, when I could have made a good thing of it, one way or the other, a cursed fatality robs me of the means. Ah! and he was growing rich, too; but he shall not enjoy his wealth, though I die like a rotten sheep, here, in this paltry place; no! not although I have lost my pocket-book, with all the documents, that could avail against him in it. No, no! I'll set you on the track, and you shall hunt him down.'

"Armed with foreknowledge, and wishing to search his soul, I said, carelessly: 'And who do you think has stolen your pocket-book?'

" 'The Carib,' he replied with a snarl, like a hungry wolf, 'that sneaking painted savage, who has been my bane and curse in this pestilent island.'

“ ‘And what, in the devil’s name, may I ask, Marinier, induced you to return here, where your person was so well known, when you had got away so snugly?’

“ ‘What is life worth without the means of keeping it comfortably? In that book was a paper worth thousands; but don’t think I am telling you all this as a favour. No; I hate you all, root and branch. Don’t think it is for love of Captain Conway, or for your own sake; but it’s justice, Monsieur Le Blanc—simple justice, I want.’ And he laughed a horrid laugh.

“ ‘Justice on whom?’ I said, though I knew very well what he was driving at. ‘And how can I serve you?’

“ ‘Ah! if I could but be sure you would do what I wish, I should die satisfied.’

“ ‘Tell me what you want, and I will see if it is to be done, though I don’t owe you much.’

“ ‘There we are equal, for it was you who first brought that cunning savage to stand for ever in my path; but that’s past and gone. Listen! I lately thought that I could make something out of Captain Conway, if the Marquis failed

me; and I played a deep game for it. Look you, when I got my liberty, I forged a date. He didn't find it out, though he read the letter. I put it into his hands, and ran the risk. Ha! ha! He thinks his cousin, Edith Conway, is to be married in November, and he is gone to England to forbid the banns: it amuses me this. She will have been wedded two months before he gets home. I poisoned his ears. I hurried him away, because he was getting too happy here with that Scotch girl: he would have married her and ruined all.

“ ‘He is gone home, but he won't touch the Marquis, not he, for he still loves his cousin Edith, poor fool! A believer in woman's constancy! how easily he was duped. I made him believe that she had loved him all through, and that she had been forced into this match. So he loves her still, and she will come round him as only woman can. What a weak fool he has proved himself! Now I have made him miserable, don't you see? His cousin Edith is miserable enough already, for she hates the Marquis. This Scotch girl will find herself forsaken; she will pine away and die. So

far so good, and all this done for his sake; but I don't want the Marquis to triumph now, though he is my old master. As I cannot enjoy life, neither shall he. We have long rowed in the same boat, and we must sink together.'

" 'Now for it,' I thought.

" 'I don't love you much, but you are the only one who cannot gain by my death; and as I have sworn to myself that the Marquis shall not enjoy his success alone, and I cannot share it, you must be the hurricane to sink him. Motives you have in plenty. He murdered your father in cold blood, and it is not improbable that, ere long, your brother may share the same fate. He persecuted and traduced your mother. You are both fiery and revengeful, and I do not think you are one likely to forget all this. Have I chosen well my instrument of vengeance, or will you live on tamely, knowing what you do?'

" 'Go on,' I said; 'be more explicit.'

" 'I will,' he replied, 'there is a fire in your eyes, that pleases me. The Marquis is living on the fat of the land, at a place called Morley Hall, not far from the sea-port of Plymouth, on the west coast of England, with the uncle of

Captain Conway—Sir Walter he is called. He has by this time married his daughter, and will succeed to the property ; for he is cunning and avaricious, as he is fierce and revengeful. See what he has done. He stole the marriage certificate of Captain Conway's parents from the mother, when she was on her death-bed, and has held this *in terrorem* over the weak and criminal old man, his uncle : but he did not keep it long in his possession, though he has preserved and even augmented his power and influence over the palsy-stricken and guilty Baronet without it. What he endeavoured to do here, through me, you know.'

" I nodded assent.

" ' Yet this is not all. In his last letter to me, he desired me to procure Captain Conway's death ; to murder him, in short. But this did not suit my plans ; so, before I lost my treasure, or rather discovered its loss, I told Captain Conway enough to make him throw up his commission suddenly, and, to his great dishonour, to desert his new love ; but at the same time I intended to go with him myself to England, and act according to circumstances, that is,

left. A short struggle, and all is over. My body will but lie and rot in the earth as all who have gone before me have done.'

" ' But, Marinier, you have a soul.'

" He looked at me with grim astonishment, and said, " I thought we had done with hypocrisy, Monsieur Le Blanc: I thought you were one of those bold men who do not tremble at death, fearing nothing beyond the grave.'

" ' And hoping nothing.'

" ' Phsaw ! you sicken me. I am mistaken in my man—curses on your mawkish sentimentality : have I wasted the last hours of my life talking to a pitiful driveller ?'

" I do not know how it was, but, of a sudden, I lost all feeling of pity and compassion for the wretch at my feet. I saw before me but a hideous monster, not a fellow-being, who was about to die an ignominious death, and I said, maliciously ;

" ' I was once like you, Marinier, and did not believe in Providence. But what think you of the intervention of the Caribs at the gushing well ?'

" This roused him as if he had been stung by an adder, and he said fiercely :

THE

AMERICAN PEOPLE

TO THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

IN EXECUTION OF THE ACT OF CONGRESS, APPROVED MARCH 3, 1879, CHAP. 106, SECTION 1, RELATIVE TO THE PUBLICATION OF THE DOCUMENTS OF THE EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT.

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1880.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, WILLIAM MCKINLEY, BY VICE-PRESIDENT GARFIELD, SECRETARY OF STATE, AND OTHER OFFICERS OF THE EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT.

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death. He is waiting for your soul, ripe enough for him.'

"His ravings and blasphemies now became awful, and I was inexpressibly delighted to hear the measured tramp of the guard relieving sentries. They halted in front of the building. The sergeant unlocked the door, and said, respectfully :

" 'Time is up, Sir.'

" 'All ready, sergeant,' I replied, and was quitting the dungeon, but I turned towards Marinier, and held out my hand to him, saying :

" 'Come, let us part friends.'

" 'Seize him, sergeant !' shouted the fiend :
"he's a spy—a conspirator—a cut-throat *sans culotte* ! He took the oath with me. Seize him, I say !'

" 'How now ?' replied the sergeant, whose name I afterwards found was Owens, sharply, and angrily. 'Keep a civil tongue in your head, you lying scoundrel, or I'll have you gagged. I know the gentleman well, Captain Conway's friend.'

"The sergeant then slammed the door to, drew the bolts, and turned the key, the wretch inside

still shouting and screaming ; nor did I lose the sound of his cries for some distance, and they have ever since rung in my ears.

“ As I passed the guard-room on my return to the surgeon’s quarters, Tom Connolly, who had just been relieved, came up to me, and, touching his cap, said, in his rich brogue :

“ ‘ Whisper now, yer honour ! I heard every word the blaaguard inside said ; and I’ll swear to onything yer honour likes. Begorra, but he’s a raal rapparee, bad luck to him ! and I’ll drink his health when the rope is round his neck !’

“ ‘ Here’s something to do it with,’ I answered, laughing, tossing Tom a dollar. ‘ Have you seen anything of the Carib lately ?’

“ Connolly answered in the negative. I was sorry that I could not meet with him, for surely he deserves our best thanks.”

Arthur had not attempted to interrupt his brother during this narrative, though he winced a little when he heard himself so severely handled by Marinier for his folly and weakness, but it mattered not. His enemy was dead, and his star was in the ascendant, so he made no comments.

François now passed briefly over the rest of his sojourn at Dominica. The two ladies were glad to escape from the dangers and sad reminiscences of this fatal island, and were now anxious to quit it. Their property was partly sold, and the rest placed in the hands of a trusty agent, and they embarked in the brig for England. Their voyage was prosperous, and the storm which had been so fatal to many, served to help them on their way, for it extended over the greater part of the Atlantic.

We have already seen how the two young men met. What happened afterwards we must give in narrative, and in another chapter.

CHAPTER X.

WHEN Ellam had bespoken beds, and ordered supper at the 'Crown,' he went down into the stable-yard for the purpose of gleaning any information he could from the gossip of those he was likely to meet there. Under the archway of the street entrance, there was a man smoking a short pipe.

It was Bill Gaffeny.

The recognition was mutual and instantaneous.

"Hillo, Tom, is that thee?" said the man, "I been pretty nigh well tired of waiting."

"Like enough," replied Ellam; "but for the storm ye'd have waited a little longer. Why didn't thee ask about us, Bill?"

"Catch me at that," replied the poacher.
"But I say, Tom! I've found it all out, and a bad job it's been too. Come this way, and I'll tell you how it was."

"Speak the worst, man, at once," said Ellam, gloomily. "Father is dead, that's it."

"Na, worse nor that."

"What the devil do you mean?"

"He been murdered out and out surely."

Ellam uttered a fierce oath.

"Go on," said he, hoarsely, "let us have it all out. No flinching, mind."

Bill Gaffeny replied in a kind of whining tone:

"Jack Briggs told it all; he had hush-money for it; vell, in spending that he got mortal lushy, and let the cat out of the bag to me one night ven we was in the beer shop, vere he puts oop ven he's tu Plymouth. Jack Briggs was stowed away snug enough behind a rock, watching for your young master, ven he seed t'ould keeper cooming sauntering along wie his goon to shoulder over the hanging-bridge in the park. Keeper stopped there some time. By-and-by a hoody, or a hawk, or some sich vermin flew over; keeper shot both barrales at un, but

didn't load agin. Just then another tall man came from the Hall side and went oop to un, and Jack Briggs says they talked very angry like for some time; just as keeper turned his back t'other man pulled out a pistol and shot un through and through. T'ould keeper staggered about the bridge foolish-like, and t'other man ran up behind and gave un a push, and he fell gun and all into the deep gully-hole vere the stream boils so; and there he be now, so Jack Briggs says. He seed the flash and smoke of the pistol, but river kicked up such a shindy he could hear no report."

"And who was the murderer, Bill Gaffeny? tell me, for by God he shall not escape!"

"T'was the foreign gentleman, him oop to Hall."

"Ha, I thought so. Can you get any proof of this, Bill? Where is Jack Briggs to be found? He must either peach, or be taken up himself. If he won't come forward, I'll set the constables on his track."

"You ouldn't do that Tom, surely?"

"Yes, but I will," replied Ellam, fiercely; "and, what is more, Bill Gaffeny, if you don't

join hand and glove with me in this business, it will be the worse for you. Remember I know something." Seeing the gipsy hesitate, Tom continued: "I'll promise from the young master to give him a hundred pounds, and the same to you for your trouble, if the murderer is brought to justice."

The poacher still hesitated.

"Come, Bill Gaffeny, do what's right. You've nothing to be afraid of, yourself; and I'll take care that Jack Briggs gets off."

"Tom, let's search the gully-hole," said the gipsy, cunningly. "I know's vere to get nets and drags, and see first, if Jack Briggs's words be true."

"That we will do, too. But I must see and have a chat with Jack Briggs, first. Come, no more nonsense, Bill; you know where he is to be found, and see him I will: so out with it at once."

"Vell," said Bill Gaffeny, as the fact of a hundred pounds began to look monstrous tempting, "I suppose Jack's to the crib still, and he'll stay lushing till he hasn't a mag left; but no constables, Tom!"

"I'll make no such bargain, Bill Gaffeny. Father has been foully murdered, and the man whose hand did it, shall be hanged. Jack Briggs had no hand in it, himself: let him turn king's evidence; it is his only chance of getting off clear."

"Vell, come along; I'll show you the lushing crib vere Jack Briggs is, pervided you comes by yourself."

Ellam was so completely absorbed with the idea of avenging his father's murder, that he forgot our hero altogether, and left the inn-yard under the guidance of the gipsy-poacher, without even saying that he was gone out on business.

Enough of ruffianism! We will spare our readers Tom Ellam's interview with the drunken scoundrel. Thanks to the bold offer of a hundred pounds, it was completely successful. And we shall see the effects.

It was very late when Ellam returned to the 'Crown,' and our hero had long gone to bed; and before it was time to call him, on the following morning, the young keeper was in the stable-yard again, waiting for a horse to be sad-

dled for his own use. He was not alone, for two ill-looking scoundrels were standing talking together near him, with some queer-looking ropes, and other gear, in their hands. But another man appears in the yard: he, too, is waiting for a horse.

The morning was just dawning, dull and grey; and there was just sufficient light to discern people's faces, at a little distance.

As the new comer passed close to Ellam, the young keeper touched his hat. The man stopped, and looked steadfastly at him, and then held out his hand, saying:

"Come, come, Ellam, none of your aristocratical notions. It may all be very well, for a soldier to an officer, but not between fellow-citizens. Shake hands, true and faithful friend."

Ellam was deeply gratified at this expression of goodwill from his master's friend, though it was not his nature to show it much; and his mind was too occupied to reflect on the strangeness of their meeting. Yet François had both thought of and desired it.

"Whither away so early, Ellam? And who

are your companions? Not very respectable-looking ones, *ma foi* !”

“ I am going to Morley Hall, Sir,” replied the keeper, in a low voice, “ to look after my old father. There has been some cruel foul play going on there.”

“ We can ride together, then, Ellam ; for I am bound to the same place.”

“ You, Sir !” said the keeper in astonishment. “ You going to Morley Hall ?”

“ Yes, Tom, to the Hall ; and if I can guess right, on some such errand as yourself.”

“ Take care, Sir ! take care, for God’s sake ! there be dangerous customers there.”

“ I am well provided, Tom,” said François, showing the butts of a brace of pistols.

“ That’s right, Sir ; and I shall be proud to go with you, when I have despatched these men on their errand.”

Then turning aside, he said to them, sharply:

“ Take the short cut over the park, and wait for me at the hanging bridge. You will be there before me, as I must go to the village, first. No shuffling, mind.”

The two ill-looking men, carrying their queer-

looking burthens, left the yard, without saying a word, for they were cowed by Ellam's determined manner; and they knew he would act up to it. The horses were brought out, and François, followed by Ellam, rode out of the town.

What a strange coincidence! two men so different in everything, that it seemed scarcely possible they should have an object in common, starting from the same inn on the same morning, each to seek the murderer of their father, and he the murderer of both.

Ellam accompanied the young Frenchman to the lodge-gates: then, taking his horse, he returned to the village of Morley, while François proceeded, on foot, to the hall.

He rang the bell. Did his heart beat as the sound pealed through the house? Did he think with Macbeth?

“Hear it not, Marquis, for it is a knell,
That summons thee to heaven or to hell!”

A surly footman opened the door, and surveyed François suspiciously, from head to foot.

The young Frenchman was very indignant, his republican pride catching fire instantly

but he restrained himself and said, civilly : " Is Monsieur de Charolles at home ? "

" He's at breakfast," replied the man, " and I don't think he will see any stranger."

François put his hand in his pocket and pulled out a guinea.

The man's eyes glistened.

" Is Monsieur at home now ? " said the young Frenchman, laughing.

" Yes, Sir," replied the footman, " whom shall I say ? "

" Say, that a foreign gentleman, just arrived from the West Indies, wishes to see him particularly for a minute or two."

" Will you walk in, Sir, there's a seat in the hall. Beg pardon, Sir, but I dare not take you further till I've seen the Marquis."

François shook the dust off his feet as he entered the superb hall. One may imagine his feelings as, for the first time, he stood under the same roof with the murderer of his father, the enemy of his race. While the servant was gone, he did not sit down, but paced up and down on the marble pavement, his eye wandering vaguely round on the quaint, old portraits

of the Deverell family that studded the walls. Had they been the masterpieces of Vandyke, or Rembrandt, they would have attracted no more notice, for though he saw, with his eyes, his mind did not accompany them. They contemplated another picture. The servant came back.

"This way, Sir, the Marquis will see you if you don't mind waiting a few minutes."

The footman's word struck a chord in François' heart. Wait, yes—wait years, centuries to see *him*, but he spoke not, and mechanically followed the servant.

He ushered François into a small, but snug room, where a fire was blazing cheerily.

"Take a chair, Sir, the Marquis will be down directly."

But François did not sit down, he stood before the fire, gazing into it.

The servant quitted the room, and shut the door.

François did a strange thing. He pulled out first one pistol, opened the pan, and saw that the priming was right, and then the other, repeating the same precautions, and replaced them in his breast.

Hark ! there are footsteps. How his heart beats. The handle of the door is turned, and a tall man enters. He is past the middle age, but still upright and graceful. His black hair is just streaked with silver, and his dark eyes glitter like drops of water in the sunshine. He is simply, but neatly dressed in a suit of deep mourning, and his manner is easy and polite.

François' eye encountered his as he turned round from the fire. 'Tis he, the man with the glittering eyes, carrying off the child. Years had not dimmed their lustre. The heart of the young Frenchman bounded against his ribs. The play must be a short one.

"Whom may I have the honour of addressing?" said the Marquis, courteously, as he surveyed the young Frenchman from head to foot with his keen, black eyes.

"My name is François Devrien, at your service."

"I do not think I have ever had the honour of seeing you before. I do not even recognise the name."

"Monsieur has forgotten me, then ; we have met once before."

"You have the advantage over me Sir,"

replied the Marquis, with a low bow. "But never mind, I think you said that you had some news of importance to communicate to me? from the West Indies, I believe?"

"Yes, Monsieur, I am just come from Guadeloupe."

"Perhaps, Sir, you will be kind enough to state in a few words what it is. My time is precious."

"I have come to warn you of danger, to put you on your guard. The young man called Arthur Conway has suddenly left the West Indies, and returned to England."

"Is that all you have to tell me," said the Jesuit, with a sneer, and an altered tone. "He has taken care to let me know it himself, poor deluded young man."

"As you know the fact, I need not, I suppose, give you the message I received for you, Monsieur le Marquis."

"If it is from him, certainly not. Poor fellow! I fear he is mad. But you are mistaken in calling me Marquis, I am, as the English say, plain Mister."

"Well, then Monsieur L'Abbé."

De Charolles looked at him keenly, and said harshly: "Are you come here to insult me, Sir?"

"By no means. I wish only to ask you a few questions in return for my news."

"This is trifling, Monsieur."

"By no means," repeated François, in a calm, quiet tone. "The questions are serious ones, if you will permit me to put them."

"Do they relate to this infatuated young man?"

"On my honour as a Frenchman, no. They relate entirely to myself." François felt himself justified in saying this.

"Then if you will be brief, and the questions do not offend me, I will answer them."

"Perhaps, Monsieur," said François, slowly, and with marked emphasis, "will be so good as to tell me my father's name."

"You are pleased to be facetious, Sir," replied de Charolles becoming a little bewildered.

"Oh! I thought as Monsienr had so many names himself, he might be able to find me one."

"If this continues, I must ring the bell for the servants," said the Jesuit, more perplexed.

"Well then," continued François, placing himself coolly between the Marquis and the bell-rope, "as you will not give me a name, I will give you several. Murderer of my father; traducer of my mother; kidnapper of their child; cruel enemy of my brother; secret, malignant viper; degraded priest; cowardly assassin—"

"I do not understand you," said the priest, with a fearful scowl. "These are hard words, young man, and must be accounted for."

François continued rapidly, as if soliloquizing. "I see it all before me now. The wood; the dying cavalier, bathed in his own blood; the screaming, frantic woman; the fierce murderer carrying off, on the white horse, a screaming child; the horse falls down, what a crash! the child's head is bruised against a stone; then all is darkness. You are the man, and I am the child; and here—look here—is the scar;" and François threw back his curling hair with his hand, and showed the mark of a deep gash just above the right temple.

"You are raving, young man," said De Charolles; "you know not what you say."

"You did not then murder my father?"

"It is a dream."

"Nor injure my brother's fair fame?"

"I know not what you mean."

"Nor carry me off from my mother's arms?"

"Sheer folly."

"It must be a dream, as you say," said François, musingly, and passing his hand across his eyes. "But tell me, Monsieur le Marquis, were you never in Provence?"

De Charolles now turned pale, and muttered a faint "No."

"And perhaps you never knew a man called Chaumelin or Marinier?"

De Charolles' face grew livid.

"Liar, as well as assassin," said François, in a deep voice, in which passion appeared concentrated. "You have but one chance left: you may kill the son as you murdered the father. I have branded you as an assassin, a liar, a traducer; but you are still a Frenchman, do not prove yourself a coward too."

De Charolles recovered himself, a gleam of ferocity sparkling in his eyes, and said, with a bitter smile: "These accusations are so gross, and so completely without foundation, yet so

artful, that it is evident you are in league with that foolish young man, Arthur Conway, as he is improperly called. He used some such idle menaces to me but a few days since. Strong in my rectitude, I defy you both. His motives I can understand, for he is jealous ; but yours without you are in his pay, are to me incomprehensible."

"Do you understand this?" said François fiercely, as he walked deliberately up to the Marquis, and struck him a sharp blow across the face with his riding-whip, raising a large whelt upon his cheek. "Liar, murderer, coward, do you understand this, or must I repeat it?"

The Marquis uttered a sharp cry between pain and rage.

"This is too much," said he warmly. "What will you with me?"

"Ah! you are becoming reasonable, Monsieur, at last," replied François, in an altered voice. "I thought you could not be a coward."

"You wish to fight me? then. Will you name a place?"

"Yes, Monsieur le Marquis, a duel to the death," said the young Frenchman, gaily; "and

anywhere you please, only let there be no delay. I am somewhat impatient."

"Will you give me half-an-hour? I have something to arrange; I will then be at your service."

"Can I trust you, Monsieur le Marquis?"

"On the honour of a Frenchman, you may."

"Treachery is useless. It is known to more than one individual that I am here, and you will but prolong your fate a little while, should you play me false."

"I have no such intention, believe me, Monsieur," replied the Marquis, with a look of deadly hate, and pointing to the whelt on his cheek. "This will vouch for me."

"*Au revoir*, then," said François with a bow. "I will occupy myself as well as I can till your return."

The Marquis turned towards the door, but the young Frenchman never for one moment took his eyes off him until it was closed upon his foe.

The idea that he might be himself the victim in the duel had scarcely even occurred to François, so resolved was he that the murderer of

his father should die by no other hand than his. It had never entered into his head that he was himself committing a fearful crime. "Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord, I will repay."

And the Marquis, when he left the room, had determined that the young Frenchman should die. Who he was, puzzled him, for he would not believe that François was really the son of him he slew—of her who scorned his love. Still he knew too much, no matter how he had gained the knowledge. He must die. He went to his own room; he packed up quickly jewels and gold, not all his own, and placed them about his person. Then he carefully loaded a brace of silver-mounted pistols. This done, he took out from a velvet case a sheathed stiletto: with the greatest care he drew it forth, and looked intensely at the point. The blade was of bright steel, but the point was of a dull green colour; he returned it carefully into the brass sheath, and placed it with the pistols in his breast. A pair of sharp silver spurs hung over the mantel-piece; these he took down and buckled on his feet. Some papers that were lying about he burned, and then, with a grim

smile, he went down stairs out of the house into the stables, and with his own hand saddled and bridled the best looking horse in them, without calling a groom. He did not, however, mount it then, but returned to the house, and went back to the room, where François was waiting for him, without being seen by a single soul.

"Now, Monsieur," he said to François, his eyes flashing fire at the remembrance of the blow, "I am at your service. If you will do me the honour to accompany me, I will lead you to a spot where there is no danger of our sport being interrupted."

"Quite ready, Marquis," replied François, with great sang-froid. "We have no seconds, no witnesses—ah! so much the better; no ceremonious preliminaries to adjust, no one to cry enough. You are sure the spot is screened from observation? I am trusting to your honour. What weapons do we fight with, Marquis? I quite forgot that I am the challenger, and I have no sword."

"A sword might attract attention," replied the Marquis, who had his particular reasons for avoiding that species of weapon. Pistols might

miss and he had a poniard. "Besides, in this country it is the fashion to use fire-arms. Pistols must settle our dispute."

"But they make a noise, Monsieur le Marquis," said François, coolly; he wished to discover what game his enemy was playing, and he feared treachery.

"I will, if Monsieur likes, take him where the report will not be heard."

"To the bridge across the mountain-stream, Marquis."

The dark hue of guilt spread like a pall over the Jesuit's face; but he said with a strange smile:

"Monsieur knows too much—let us end this farce."

"So be it," replied François gaily. "I follow you, Monsieur le Marquis de Charolles."

They passed through the hall without being seen, the great door was open and they entered the park. François following the footsteps of his enemy, and watching every motion.

They had to go round part of the house on their way to the bridge. The wind was blustering and raving amidst the branches of the

trees, and whirling round the corner of the building. They did not hear the approaching tramp of many feet, and the hum of many voices, for the wind drowned them.

Just as they turned the angle, the Marquis suddenly stopped, for his eyes encountered a sight he did not expect nor wish to see.

Some dozen of the villagers were coming across the lawn towards the house, carrying amongst them something lying on a rude bier covered with a sheet. In advance of them was our old friend Tom Ellam, with a constable, and just behind them the ill-looking gipsy poacher, Bill Gaffeny.

François was behind him, his retreat was cut off. The Marquis therefore advanced boldly, trusting to escape notice amongst the crowd, but he was mistaken.

"That's un." "Seize un, constable." "The bloody villain," and such-like phrases, cried some of the most eager, pressing forwards towards De Charolles.

"Hands off, base *canaille*," cried the Marquis, savagely, drawing forth a pistol and cocking it. "The first man who touches me dies."

The crowd and the constable hesitated, though Tom Ellam advanced cool and determined.

"Of what am I accused?" said De Charolles, hoarsely.

"Of murder," "murder," "murder," came in different accents from many voices.

"And who accuses me?"

"I," said Tom Ellam, boldly; "the son of him you so brutally and cowardly murdered. See here!" and he removed the sheet, and disclosed the corpse of old Ellam.

"I know you not," replied the Marquis, contemptuously.

"But I know you well, master," said Bill Gaffeny, coming forward.

"And I saw him fire the shot," said a voice in the crowd.

"Who speaks?" said the Marquis; "what raven croaks there?"

"I! Jack Briggs! I saw you do it."

De Charolles face grew livid. He turned to François, and said, in an accent, that no pen can describe, so cutting, so expressive of deadly hate, and withering sarcasm was it, though the

words were few and simple: "This is your doing, Monsieur."

"On my honour, no!" replied François, eagerly. "Had I my wish, you should die by no hand but mine."

A strange expression passed over the face of the accused one, and he said: "Who are you, then, in truth, who thus seeks my death?"

"I am the son of her you basely slandered, Eugenie de la Motte; of him you stabbed in the wood, near Marseilles."

"You hear him?" said the Marquis to the crowd.

"I am the brother of him you have deprived of his inheritance—of him you would have murdered, as you did my father."

"You hear him?" said the Marquis again.

The crowd stood agape; they expected some strange confession to follow. No one moved.

"Is this true," said the Marquis; "or is this a story concocted by the young man, Arthur Conway."

"It is true," replied François, solemnly. "Your agent, Marinier, confessed it to me before he was hanged."

"All—did he tell you all? Your father's name?"

"No; but I can guess it."

"How?"

"The marriage certificate you stole, proves it sufficiently."

"Ha! it is found, then?"

"Yes; and Arthur Conway triumphs, and his mother is avenged!"

"Then, you must die for him."

And with a quick and sudden motion, De Charolles drew out a pistol. A cry burst from the crowd. They saw the flash, and the smoke; but no one fell.

For while the Marquis was thus strangely interrogating the young Frenchman; Tom Ellam, fearing some treachery, had stolen gently up, unperceived, behind his back, and watched his every motion. When suddenly, the murderer placed his hand in his breast, and drew forth the pistol; the young keeper threw himself on him, with a quick spring and a loud cry. He was only just in time; the weapon was presented, the trigger was pulled, but the bullet went wide of its object.

A shattering of glass accompanied, rather than followed the report.

A wild female shriek echoed it.

And then there was a short, but awful pause. For a moment the Marquis was staggered; he reeled about, and something fell from his breast.

Bill Gaffeny darted forward, and picked it up. But the struggle was of short duration; with one powerful effort of his sinewy frame, he cast off the young keeper, strong and active as he was, as a lion shakes off a bull-dog.

He spoke no more, but his eye was unflinching; his lips did not even quiver, as he again put his hand to his breast. The poniard was gone; there remained but the other pistol. Fortunate chance for François.

The Marquis drew it out.

Again the crowd shrieked.

But this time the murderer turned the muzzle to his own heart, and pulled the trigger.

For one second the body of the Marquis stood upright, and then with a crash he fell forward on his face.

There was a solemn silence for a moment.

Again a woman's cry broke it.

The crowd closed round the fallen Marquis. They raised him up, and in a moment laid him down again on his back, for he was dead.

François gazed for a moment on the distorted features of his prostrate enemy, and said: "Arthur, dear Arthur, thy foes are falling fast. Two! One yet remains. I will not spare him, for I have made no promise;" and he turned towards the entrance of the house.

The door was open. Everything was already in confusion; servants hurrying about hither and thither, amazed and bewildered. No one opposed his entrance.

A young lady came suddenly out of a room, and rushed across the hall.

François did not know her, but with the instinctive feelings of a gentleman, he drew back, and made her a low bow.

The young lady was evidently violently agitated, for at first she did not even perceive him, and was hurrying past him towards the door, crying for help.

François saw this at a glance, and he stepped forward at once, saying: "I do not know, Mademoiselle, whom I have the honour of addressing, but can I be of any service to you?"

She looked at him with amaze and bewilderment, and passed her hand across her brow, and said: "The voice is that of Arthur Conway, but the features are not his. Tell me in mercy who you are, and what you want here?"

"I seek Sir Walter Conway," replied François, answering only the latter part of her question.

"Help, help," she cried, "whoever you are; my father is dying. Run for a surgeon; lose not a moment, I beseech you."

"I am a stranger, Mademoiselle," he said hurriedly; "I will send Ellam at once, on horseback; he knows the roads, and will be quicker than I can be."

"Yes, yes, Ellam will go; but be quick, I pray you."

François ran out into the open air, and called to Ellam.

The keeper came to him.

"Saddle a horse at once, and ride for the nearest doctor, Ellam," said François. "The Baronet is taken with a fit: he is dying."

"There is one ready saddled and all, in the stable," said one of the grooms. "I looked in

just now, and seen un; he maun have saddled heself though."

"Bring him out then," said the young keeper, and in a few minutes he was galloping off in search of a doctor.

François returned to the house.

A servant met him in the hall, and taking him for the doctor, said: "This way, Sir, master is going fast, if he be not dead already."

François did not undeceive him. He had a strange and morbid wish to behold the face of Arthur's last enemy ere he died. Two, and this the third, and he the brother of him they had so fearfully wronged, present at their last moments upon earth.

He entered the library. The table was covered with breakfast-things, not yet touched. And who was it that had come, like a harpy, to scare away those who should have eaten them? Who but he—

Lying upon the floor, with the head resting in the lap of the young lady who had met him in the hall, was the lifeless form of an old grey-headed man. The pallor of death had already spread over the face; the jaw was sunk, and the eyes fixed. Sir Walter Conway was dead.

We must imagine what ensued, for it will not do to bring prominently forward a new character at this period of our story; but it subsequently became known to Arthur that his cousin Louisa was standing at the library window, which looked out towards the stream. She saw a number of people coming across the park towards the hall, bearing something amongst them. Her curiosity was aroused, and she remained at the window.

She heard the horrid cry of "Murder, murder, murder," raised by the crowd, and she saw the body brought forward on the rude bier and uncovered; but not till then did she see a figure, with its back towards the house, confronting the Marquis, and she thought it was Arthur. She saw the pistol drawn out, and presented at the figure, and she shrieked aloud.

Then came the smashing of the glass and the whizzing of the bullet.

This startled and alarmed her father.

"What is all this, Louisa?" he said, querulously.

"I cannot understand it," she replied. "They seem to be arresting De Charolles: they point to a corpse; they cry "Murder."

"Come away, foolish girl," said the old man. "You are telling falsehoods."

"No, no; it is the truth, father," she continued still, looking out of the window. "Look, look! he would have shot poor Arthur. That's Ellam! Well done; he has thrown himself upon the Marquis; and now, see! see! Merciful God! he points the pistol to his own breast."

Almost simultaneously with the second pistol report, there was a dull heavy falling sound behind her.

Instantaneously she turned round, and a second shriek burst from her lips.

The old man was stretched on the floor in the agonies of death. He had attempted to rise, or the convulsive struggles of nature had thrown him forwards out of his chair.

She ran to him, and raised his head. His face was blackened and distorted, the eyes starting from the sockets, and there was foam on his thin lips. Terrified! she let the head fall, and rushed into the hall, where she met François.

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Little now remains to be told.

The coroner's jury returned a verdict on the three bodies. They found that the old keeper had been wilfully murdered by the deceased Marquis de Charolles, who had committed *felo-de-se*, and that Sir Walter Conway had died by the visitation of God.

The funeral of the Baronet was very quiet; that of old Ellam was attended by nearly every inhabitant of the parish of Morley, and the body of the self-murdered was buried at the meeting of four roads, with a stake run through it.

Poor old Ellam was right; a will, dated 1st of November, '95, was found; in which, after settling a small jointure on his widow, and bequeathing five thousand pounds to his youngest daughter, Louisa, everything was left to Edith, and to her issue, by the Marquis de Charolles, provided he took the name and arms of the Conways. Arthur was not even mentioned.

As may be supposed, there was no little difficulty and delay, in collecting and arranging the proper proofs for maintaining Arthur's claim to Morley. His legitimacy was, however, established, and in the end he succeeded both to

the title and the estates, as the heir to his uncle, Sir Walter Conway.

The mortgages on the Grange were redeemed, and this estate, which was found to be entailed on the male heir, was made over to the Dowager Lady Conway, for her life. Need we say, that he made a handsome provision for his cousin Louisa.

Many curious and interesting points of law, no doubt, would, or might have arisen, had there been any one to dispute Arthur's claim to the succession; but there was no opposition, and he escaped Chancery.

And now, Arthur himself, as if to complicate the question, and to prove the futility, we will not call it wickedness of Sir William Deverell's will, in marking, so strongly, the distinctiveness of creeds in a Christian country, had taken to his bosom a Catholic wife—not a bigotted one, certainly, for she allowed her children to be brought up as Protestants, but deeply attached to it as the religion of her forefathers.

François de la Motte and his lovely wife remained for some years in England; but when the blazing star of the Emperor shone dazzlingly

over France, he returned to his native country, and entered his service. He did not, however, rise very high, for though the lovely Creole and her charming children were much noticed by the Empress Josephine, and though he greatly distinguished himself in the campaigns on the continent against the Austrians, his constant refusal to fight against the English, those stumbling blocks in the path of his mighty master, brought him eventually into disgrace. He was permitted to retire from the service, and, changing the sword for the ploughshare, he lived very happily with Rosalie and her lovely children at the large farm near Fréjus in Provence.

The faithful Tom Ellam courted and won the no less faithful Dinah Derrick, and raised up a sturdy generation in the keeper's lodge of Morley Hall, which, with a good piece of land, was confirmed to him and his successors by his grateful young master, who, however, never would regard him as a servant, much to Ellam's annoyance at times.

What became of the kind surgeon we are not informed, nor of our friend Tom Connolly. It is to be hoped, however, that they escaped the

thousand-and-one jaws of death that yawned for them in the tropics.

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It is a lovely summer evening, such only as England knows, though the morning has been stormy. The light westerly breeze is gently rustling the leaves of the wide-spreading oaks. The dappled deer are one by one withdrawing leisurely and gracefully from their grateful shade. There is a distant sound of falling waters. The birds are singing merrily in the flowery thorn-bushes. There is a hum of bees as they dart from blossom to blossom. There is a fresh perfume in the air. Everything seems full of life, and joy, and fragrance.

This summer evening is the type of the hearts of those two who are seated under yon stately oak.

A lovely little girl of two years old, with blue eyes, and golden hair, is playing at their feet.

Her name is Edith.

"Ah, Marguerite! were not Rosalie's words prophetic?"

"What words, dear Arthur?"

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